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A

# HISTORY OF NEW ENGLAND.

WITH

Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians

CALLED

## BAPTISTS.

BY

ISAAC BACKUS.

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Second Edition, with Notes.

BY

DAVID WESTON.

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VOLUME II.

NEWTON, MASS.:

PUBLISHED BY THE BACKUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

1871.

PRINTED BY THE PROVIDENCE PRESS COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO VOLUME II.

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The powers of thinking and choice are so essential to all rational spirits, that without them no idea can be formed of their existence. A desire of the knowledge and enjoyment of the best good, also appears essential to their nature. Therefore, as finite knowledge is limited, finite spirits would ever be liable to err, if they had not some sufficient guard against it. And the best guard we can conceive of, is a clear, fixed persuasion in the heart, that God is the only fountain of all good ; and that every desirable good is to be obtained and enjoyed in the way of obedience to his revealed will, and nowhere else.

That he is the absolute Proprietor, and the sovereign Ruler of the worlds he has made, is a truth too evident for any but madmen to deny. All nations have been forced to appeal to him, to avenge injustice and perjury, in order to establish any government among themselves. Yet how far have they been from a willingness to be governed entirely by him ! He made man upright ; but they have sought out many inventions. Objects of worship and forms of worship, even without number, have been invented by mankind ; the folly whereof God has exposed in all his dispensations : Yet self-conceit, self-seeking, and self-dependence, are still the ruining errors of the world.

His design in all his dispensations, in every age, and every country, is undoubtedly the same in nature with that declared to Israel, in the passage which adorns our title page.<sup>1</sup> Three things deserve particular notice therein. 1. That it is the Lord who leads his people through all the changing scenes of life, in this wilderness world. At different times and places their circumstances vary exceedingly ; yet he orders or overrules in all, so that a sparrow cannot fall to the ground, nor a hair from their head, without him. 2. All his dealings are calculated in infinite wisdom, for their trial and humiliation ; to discover what is in their hearts, whether they will keep

<sup>1</sup>Deut. viii. 2. Title page, Vol. II, old edition.—ED.

his commandments, or not. Therefore, 3. He requires them to remember all the way wherein he leads them, for this end.

Christianity, the only true religion, has its name from Christ, the Foundation, Lawgiver, and only Head of his church. And one of the greatest historians of our age gives us the following account of its primitive order and government. Says he, "The rites instituted by Christ [himself], were only two in number, and these designed to continue to the end of the church here below, without any variation. These were Baptism and the Holy Supper; which were not to be considered as mere ceremonies, nor yet as symbolical representations only, but also as ordinances, accompanied with sanctifying influence upon the heart and affections of true Christians." Of those who heard and believed the preaching of John the Baptist, he says, "They were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer, by the ceremony of *immersion* or *baptism*." And during the first century, he says, "The sacrament of baptism was administered [in this century] without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by *immersion* of the whole body."<sup>1</sup> This was the primitive way of admission into the Christian church; and of its government our author says, "The people were, undoubtedly, the first in authority; for the apostles shewed by their example, that nothing of moment was to be carried on or determined without the consent of the assembly. Acts i. 15; vi. 3; xv. 4; xxi. 22. . . . A bishop, during the first and second century, was the person who had the care of one Christian assembly, which, at that time, was, generally speaking, small enough to be contained in a private house. In this assembly he acted not so much with the authority of a master, as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant." And he assures us, that until about the middle of the second century, "the churches were entirely independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rulers, and its own laws;" and that an alteration was then made, by industriously propagating the opinion, that Christian ministers succeeded to the rights and privileges of the Jewish priesthood.<sup>2</sup> Heathen philosophy was also called in to interpret the Scriptures by; from whence teachers adopted this maxim, viz., "That it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by that means the interests of the church might be promoted." To which they added, in the fourth century, under Constantine, the use of temporal penalties, and corporal tortures, for the same end.<sup>3</sup>

In the mean time a controversy arose about bringing infants to baptism. In the beginning of the third century, Tertullian, who is the first writer that mentions it, opposed it, saying, "What need is there that the god-fathers should be brought into danger? because they may either fail of their

<sup>1</sup>Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, pp. 32, 91, 96. Dublin edition.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, pp. 70, 76, 77, 139.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, pp. 155, 314.



promises by death, or they may be mistaken by a child's proving of a wicked disposition." But not long after, Origen appeared for the practice, and said, "Let it be considered what is the reason, that whereas the baptism of the church is given for the forgiveness of sins, infants also are, by the usage of the church, baptized. It is for that reason, because by the sacrament of baptism the pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized."<sup>1</sup> Origen is the first man that any have produced, who pleaded for infant baptism: and he also held that the torments of the damned will have an end; and that Christ will be crucified in the next world to save the devils.<sup>2</sup> Now when heathen philosophy was set up as a rule to interpret Scripture by; when the shadows of the Old Testament were taken to draw a veil over the truth and church order described in the gospel, and teachers pretended to confer renewing grace by their administrations, before the subjects were taught or believed; and also called in the secular arm to enforce their measures by temporal penalties and corporal tortures, what could be expected but the antichristian apostasy? Oh, how dark was the night that followed!

Yet God did not leave himself without witnesses in the darkest times; some of whom I will name. Peter de Bruys, during a ministry of twenty years, made the most laudable attempts to reform abuses, and to remove the superstitions that disfigured the beautiful simplicity of the gospel, and had a great number of followers, in Languedoc and Provence, in France; and he was burnt therefor at St. Giles, in the year 1130. His disciples were called Petrobrussians; and a leading article of their faith was, "That no persons whatever were to be baptized before they came to the full use of their reason." Soon after, another minister, whose name was Henry, travelled from Switzerland through various parts of France, preaching the gospel with great success, until he came to the city of Thoulouse, where the Pope and his creatures raised great opposition against him, and cast him into prison in 1148; and he ended his days there not long after. He was thus dealt with because "He rejected the baptism of infants; censured with severity the corrupt and licentious manner of the clergy, and treated the festivals and ceremonies of the church with the utmost contempt."<sup>3</sup>

This account is given by a very learned Lutheran author, who was strongly prejudiced against the modern Baptists, because he held that the Christian church was in its minority, when it was governed in the manner above described; and that in its mature age, "the regulation of it was, in some measure, to be accommodated to the time, and left to the wisdom and prudence of the chief rulers, both of the State and of the church;"<sup>4</sup> which opinion the Baptists have ever opposed. He freely owns, that the peculiarities of their churches in Germany and Holland are derived from a maxim

<sup>1</sup>Clark against Gill upon Baptism, pp. 105, 111.

<sup>3</sup>Mosheim, Vol. II, pp. 437—439.

<sup>2</sup>Mosheim, Vol. I, p. 476.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, Vol. I, pp. 68—70.

of reformation, which was held by the Waldenses, Petrobrussians, Wickliffites, and Hussites, long before Luther's day ; which is, " That the kingdom of Christ, or the visible church he had established upon earth, was an assembly of real and true saints, and ought therefore to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous, and also exempt from all those institutions, which human prudence suggests to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform transgressors." This maxim he declares to be the source of all their peculiarities. In 1525, and in 1533, a few men who were called Anabaptists, took the lead among mixed multitudes, that had taken up arms against cruel tyrants, in hopes of recovering both civil and religious liberty thereby ; but they perished in the attempt : A sight of which carried the Baptist churches in that country so far into the other extreme, as not to allow their members to be magistrates, to use the sword, or to take an oath ;<sup>1</sup> which are now the sentiments of the German Baptists in Pennsylvania. But the English Baptists, both in Europe and America, have carefully avoided each of these extremes, for these hundred and fifty years ; yet those scandals in Germany have been constantly cast upon them, even down to this day ; not because they ever had the least concern therewith, but because this has been found to be a powerful engine to prejudice the populace against allowing equal religious liberty, and for forcing people into religious covenants, before they can choose for themselves.

All the reformation that ever took place, in any age or country, was produced by the word of truth, enforced by the spirit of truth, upon each heart and conscience. And the admission of unsanctified communicants into the Christian church, and of the inventions of men to govern it, has caused endless confusions ; as thereby three opposite interests have been set up. The interest of religious teachers, of civil officers, and of the people. The two former have conspired together, to enslave the latter ; and yet have been far from an entire harmony betwixt themselves. Their contests for preëminence have been long and tedious in this country ; but a great and effectual door is now opened for terminating these disputes, and for a return to the primitive purity and liberty of the Christian church. To trace out the evil effects of the apostasy, and to promote, as much as may be, such a return, is the great design both of this and the former volume. In compiling them a large number of records, books and papers, have been searched, and much pains taken to set principles and actions in as clear light as possible. And the author is so far from desiring indulgence in any mistakes, that he earnestly requests the help of all to correct them.

MIDDLEBOROUGH, August 2, 1784.

<sup>1</sup>Mosheim, Vol. III, pp. 524, 525, 549.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO VOLUME III.

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The former volumes of our history were published under great disadvantages. The first of them came out in the height of our war, when all the power of Britain was exerted to compel America to give up her most essential rights ; while one sect here were as earnest to compel all others to submit to their power in religious matters. How difficult then was it for a very imperfect man to give a just view of these affairs ! And the many mistakes of the printers rendered the work still more obscure. And though the second volume was better composed, and more correctly printed, yet the last part of it was hurried through the press, so as to prevent its being finished as I intended. Yet I know not of any public dispute about the truth of facts in the history. Many have privately discovered their dislike of the publication of them, because their own schemes of power and gain were exposed thereby.

For the capital scheme of policy, for two centuries past, both in Europe and America, has been to maintain a balance of power among the nations, and among religious sects, so as to compel all to submit to government. And a man of great knowledge in Pennsylvania, when he read my first volume, in 1779, said in a letter to me, "I think it needs not a spirit of prophecy to predict, that America is to be stained with the blood of the saints. I am afraid there is a foundation laid for it already. I wish it may not be with particular design. Formerly there was a proper balance of power between Episcopalians and Dissenters, taken in England and America together ; but now that balance is lost. Formerly there was a check on the licentiousness of power in America, by an appeal to the crown ; but where shall the persecuted Americans appeal now ? Not to Congress, not to the united force of America ; they disclaim any such right ; they will be judges of no such matters. They can then only appeal to their oppressors and accusers." And he had the following reasons for his fears :—The American war begun between Episcopalians and Congre-

gationalists, and the Presbyterians joined with the latter, and they were the uppermost party in Pennsylvania through the war. And when the Warren Association sent an agent to Philadelphia, while the first Congress was sitting there, in 1774, the members of it from the Massachusetts plainly manifested that they would sooner yield to the power of Britain, than they would give up their power of supporting Congregational ministers by tax and compulsion. And Boston, where the war began, was the only place in America where they had hanged men for religion. And an eminent man in Virginia says, "Several acts of the Virginia Assembly, of 1659, 1662 and 1693, had made it penal in parents to refuse to have their children baptized; had prohibited the unlawful assembling of Quakers; had made it penal for any master of a vessel to bring a Quaker into the State; had ordered those already here, and such as should come thereafter, to be imprisoned until they should abjure the country; provided a milder punishment for the first and second return, but death for their third. . . . If no capital executions took place here, as did in New England, it was not owing to the moderation of the church, or spirit of the legislature, as may be inferred from the law itself; but to historical circumstances which have not been handed down to us."<sup>1</sup> Though the following things may alter his mind:—

1. The light of revelation hath ever enlarged the capacities of men beyond any other means in the world, so that wars among such have been the most destructive of any upon earth. Half a million of men were slain in one day, in a battle between Judah and Israel. II Chron. xiii. 17. And we have no record of such a slaughter in any other day since Adam fell. And the Quakers were so fierce against the teachers and rulers of the Massachusetts, that they did not see how they could possibly keep up their religious government without hanging some of them. But the government of Virginia was in no such danger from them.

2. The first of those laws in Virginia was made but just before Charles the Second came to the throne, who put a stop to those bloody executions here; and no man has been hanged since for religion, in England or America.

3. The Quakers hold that their children are born in their church, which, by a secret policy, has been upheld as one great body in Europe and America; and they held so much with Britain in the late war, that two of them were hanged, and others were banished, by the government of Pennsylvania, as enemies to their country. But as the Baptists hold all religion to be personal, between God and individuals, and that all church power is in each particular church, it is impossible for them ever to form any great body, that can be dangerous to any civil government.

<sup>1</sup>Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, p. 167.

The Baptists and Quakers have therefore been unjustly ranked together, when their principles are opposite to each other. And when the church of Christ shall come to be governed wholly by his laws, independent of all the inventions of men, all sectarian distinctions will cease, and wars will come to an end. Though Europe and America are now so far from this, that sectarian distinctions are often begun with capitals, while those important names, Christian and Christianity, are begun with small letters.

And as I have met with some high claims of sectarian power in 1783, that I had not seen when our Second Volume was published, I begin this in that year; and through the whole have compared actions and events with the word of God, according to the best light I could gain from every quarter. For as the Massachusetts have now determined not to revise their constitution of government, and they, with three other States, are constantly oppressing the Baptists, while they are using all their arts to entice all into the use of force to support religious ministers, there appears to be great need of holding up light against these evils.

The list of Baptist churches in our southern States, and of some in New England, I have taken from Mr. John Asplund's Register, for 1794; but the most of them in New England are taken from later accounts. As he was at Boston when my list was printed, he prevailed with my friends there to insert some names that I did not intend to have mentioned.

This Volume was written with an expectation of closing it with 1795, but as it was not finished till June, 1796, some things are added in this year. All the dates are set in old style, until the new took place, in 1752.



# History of the Baptists in New England.

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## CHAPTER XII.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE AFFAIRS OF RHODE ISLAND COLONY.—OF PARTICULAR ERRORS THEREIN.—THEIR CIVIL STATE CONCISELY DESCRIBED.—THEIR ORDER COMMENDED BY MASSACHUSETTS MINISTERS.—REMARKS THEREON.—ACCOUNT OF THE ROGERENES.—THE SAME INSTRUCTIVE TO OTHERS.

Since the disorders in Rhode Island Colony have often been recurred to, as a prevailing argument for supporting worship by tax and compulsion, the evil effects of which have had a great influence in continuing some of those disorders, a humble attempt shall here be made to search this matter to the bottom. And in the first place we are to remember, that the existence of that colony, as a distinct government, was long an eyesore to many of their neighbors; who tried a variety of mean and cruel methods to divide and conquer it. Solomon says, Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and none will pretend that all the inhabitants of that colony were wise men. Yet all the madness of their wise men, and all the ignorance and folly of others, have been industriously held up to the world, as a convincing proof of the necessity of an established religion by human laws. And as the terms *learned* and *orthodox* have been con-



nected in this argument, colleges and persecution have grown up together in the ideas of multitudes ; and in not a few, Calvinism, family worship, and a religious regard to the Christian Sabbath, have gone into the same connection. Notwithstanding, it is most certain that Mr. Williams, the founder of said colony, and Mr. Clarke, who procured their second charter, were men of superior learning, and held strictly to the doctrines of sovereign grace, and to the duties of private and public worship ; as many other fathers of the colony also did. But their children, as well as others, have been more ready to retain their errors than their virtues ; some of which I will name.

Daily prayer to God for what we need, and praises for what we receive, are duties taught by reason as well as revelation ; and every person is inexcusable that neglects the immediate practise of those duties. Psalm cvii. 8, 15, 28, 43 ; Acts xvii. 27 ; Rom. i. 20, 21. But the ordinances of special communion in the Christian church, are only known by pure revelation, which requires previous personal qualifications before any may partake therein. But Mr. Williams, about the time of his banishment from the Massachusetts, blended these two kinds of duties so much together, as to oppose the inculcating of prayer upon the unregenerate,<sup>1</sup> as well as the immediate practise of church communion ; as if a criminal might not petition for help and mercy, nor give thanks for what he received, any more than to act in fellowship with his prince before he was pardoned and reconciled. And casting off fear, and restraining prayer before God, is so exceeding natural to fallen men, that great numbers have held fast this error. Above three years after Mr. Williams was banished, he also stumbled upon another error, which many who reproach him are still tenacious of ; namely, the opinion that ministerial authority must be derived by an external succession from inspired men. The con-

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 68.—Ed.



founding of the Jewish priesthood with the gospel ministry, is the source of this error. Upon their return from Babylon, those priests who could not produce a register of their succession from Aaron, were not suffered to officiate as such, until a new mission should be given from above. Ezra ii. 62, 63. And not finding a like register from the apostles, caused Mr. Williams to refrain from church communion in his latter days,<sup>1</sup> though not from public worship. And how ready have many been from hence to excuse themselves in a careless neglect of all religion! To this Gorton's teaching and influence added great force. He had a singular knack of turning the Scriptures in mist and allegory,<sup>2</sup> under a pretence of great spirituality; and also at running down his opponents with satire and ridicule; arts that have been very bewitching in latter ages. The coming and sufferings of Christ he held to be mystical, and not literal; and he treated the doctrine of visible, instituted churches with the utmost contempt. Says he, "Such pharisaical interpreters, who erect churches as true churches of God, that admit of decay and falling from God, in whole or any members thereof, are they who have deceived and undone the world, from the foundation thereof unto this day, and are the proper *witches* of the world which the Scripture intends." And he construed the mint, anise and cummin of the Pharisees, as applicable to all who practice the external administration of baptism, breaking of bread, and church censures.<sup>3</sup> He was a leader in public worship at Warwick for sixty years, by way of teaching, prayer and singing; but having no successor furnished with his art, a neglect if not a contempt of public worship and of other religious duties has greatly prevailed in those parts, enforced with the remembrance of former cruelties shown to their fathers under religious pretences. And as Calvinism was the general plan of orthodoxy among their oppressors, the opposite sentiments more

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 360.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 132, 133.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>Gorton's Antidote against Pharisaical Teachers, pp. 42, 52.

easily prevailed in most of the Baptist churches, though it was an apostasy from the doctrines they were founded upon. And running into extremes, on other accounts, increased their unhappiness. Being hardly accused with the want of valid administrators, moved seven Baptist churches, who met in London in 1643, to declare it as their faith, that by Christ's commission, every disciple who had a gift to preach the gospel, had a right to administer baptism, even before he was ordained in any church.<sup>1</sup> But it is to be observed, that Philip was an ordained officer in the church before he baptized the young believers at Samaria; while none but apostles laid on hands after baptism, both there and at Ephesus; acts which were attended with extraordinary effects in each place. Acts viii. 14, 17; xix. 6. Yet Mr. Samuel Hubbard informs us, that in 1652 the practice was adopted, first at Providence, and then at Newport, of gifted disciples administering both baptism and laying on of hands, who were not ordained officers in any church; which practice was continued by some for many years after. In 1725, the second church in Swansey voted to make laying on of hands a term of their communion. Perhaps others had done so before.<sup>2</sup> Many contentions and divisions were caused by these things, which greatly obstructed gospel order in their churches. But as the Christian church is the pillar and ground of the truth, and baptism is the initiating ordinance thereof, it surely must belong to her, especially at ordinary times, to set men apart to administer it.

Internal right, and an external warrant to exercise it, are distinct things. Every renewed soul has an internal right to the special privileges of the church of Christ; and those

<sup>1</sup>Crosby. Vol. I, Appendix p. 21.—B.

“The person designed by Christ to dispense baptism, the Scripture holds forth to be a disciple; it being no where tied to a particular church officer, or person extraordinarily sent, the commission enjoining the administration being given to them as considered disciples, being men able to preach the gospel.” A Confession of Faith of seven Congregations or Churches of Christ in London, which are commonly but unjustly called Anabaptists. Article XLI.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>See Vol. I. p. 405.—Ed.

to whom he has given special gifts for the ministry, have an internal right to improve them; but a person must be received as an orderly member of a particular church in order to his acting as such; and those who are qualified for officers ought to be set apart as such before they baptize others. This is now generally allowed. Both Scripture and reason plainly shew, that actions may be done in extraordinary cases, which ought not to be done in ordinary times.

As to their civil affairs, the first charter of Providence Colony extended to the Pequot River and country, that is, into the heart of New London County; and it was given eighteen years before Connecticut charter. And the second charter to Rhode Island Colony was given by the same authority which gave that of Connecticut; and this authority fixed the line betwixt them in a most explicit manner. Yet Connecticut made a practice of violently crowding over that line for above sixty years after they received their charter. In 1720 Governor Jencks was sent over as agent to England for help against them. At length, on September 27, 1728, Roger Wolcott, James Wadsworth, and Daniel Palmer, Commissioners for Connecticut, and William Wanton, Benjamin Ellery, and William Jencks, for Rhode Island, signed a settlement of that line. The south part is exactly according to Rhode Island charter; the north part bears a little east thereof. Plymouth Colony was only a voluntary combination among themselves, as to government; though they were allowed to continue so till the revolution. And Rhode Island charter was given twenty-eight years before Plymouth was incorporated with the Massachusetts; yet the line on that side was never established, until it was done by a special commission in 1741, according to the oldest charter;<sup>1</sup> which gave Rhode Island the towns of Little Compton, Tiverton, Bristol, Warren, Barrington, and Cumberland, that they had not enjoyed before.<sup>2</sup> The history of their

<sup>1</sup>Douglas, Vol. I, p. 400; Vol. II, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 278, 282.



civil government may properly be divided into four periods. Before the revolution of 1688, parties both on secular and religious accounts caused much unhappiness. From thence to 1732 their government was in wise and steady hands ; so that they had but two Governors in thirty-four years. Afterwards a depreciating paper currency, with bribery in elections, produced many and great evils ; a sight of which moved the two competitors for the office of Governor amicably to give up their pretensions, and to prevail with a very peaceable gentleman<sup>1</sup> to accept the chair in 1769. Since then, bribery and party influence have been better guarded against. And can any or all of these things afford the least reason against equal liberty, or for the use of compulsion in the support of worship ? Yea, have not our opponents given evidence to the contrary in that Colony ? The first Congregational church therein was formed at Newport, and Mr. Nathanael Clap, from Dorchester, was ordained their pastor, November 3, 1720. He was a man of eminent piety, who began to preach there in 1695, and was a great blessing among them till his death, on October 30, 1745, aged 78 ; for whom Mr. John Callender preached and printed a Funeral Sermon. Mr. Clap was a hearty friend to the primitive order of their churches ; but Mr. John Adams, a young teacher of the modern stamp, gained the affections of a large part of his church ; and because Mr. Clap could not consent to his settling as colleague with him, nor break bread to a number of the members, a party council divided the church, and the young minister was ordained over a majority, April 11, 1728 ; so that Mr. Clap was shut out of his meeting-house, and his people built another for him. The third Congregational church in that Colony was constituted at Providence, over which Mr. Josiah Cotton was ordained, October 23, 1728.<sup>2</sup> Some things previous to

<sup>1</sup>John Cranston.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>Comer's Diary and papers. In less than two years Adams was dismissed by his church, and not recommended.

this last event call for a place in our history. After considerable labors in Providence for it, the Massachusetts ministers sent them the following letter:—

To the Honorable Joseph Jencks, Esq., late Deputy Governor, William Hopkins, Esq., Major Joseph Williams, Joseph Whipple, Esq., Colonel Richard Waterman, Arthur Venner, Esq., — Wilkinson, Esq., Philip Tillinghast, Esq., Captain Nicholas Power, Captain Thomas Harris, Captain William Harris, Andrew Harris, Esq., — Brown, Esq., John Burton, Esq., Jonathan Sprague, jun., Esq., and to the other eminent men in the town of Providence.<sup>1</sup> Pardon our ignorance, if any of your honorable Christian names, or if your proper order be mistaken.

HONORABLE GENTLEMEN: We wish you grace, mercy and peace, and all blessings for time and eternity, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. How pleasing to Almighty God and our glorious Redeemer, and how conducive to the public tranquility and safety, an hearty union and good affection of all pious protestants, of whatsoever particular denomination on account of some differences in opinion, would be, by the divine blessing, yourselves as well as we, are not insensible. And with what peace and love, societies of different modes of worship have generally entertained one another in your government, we cannot think of it without admiration; and we suppose, under God, it is owing to the choice liberty granted to protestants of all persuasions, in the royal charter graciously given you; and to the wise and prudent conduct of the gentlemen that have been improved as Governors and Justices in your Colony. And the Rev. Mr. Greenwood, before his decease at Rehoboth, was much affected with the wisdom and excellent temper, and great candor of such of yourselves as he had the honor to wait upon, and with those worthy and obliging expressions of kind respect he met with, when he discoursed about his desires to make an experiment, whether the preaching of our ministers in Providence might not be acceptable, and whether some who do not greatly incline to frequent any pious meeting in the place, on the first day of the week, might not be drawn to give their presence to hear our ministers, and so might be won over (by the influence of heaven) into serious godliness. And although God has taken that dear brother of ours from his work in this world, yet it has pleased the Lord to incline some reverend ministers of Connecticut, and some of ours, to preach among you;<sup>2</sup> and we are beholden to the mercy of heaven for the freedom and

<sup>1</sup>I am well informed, that Jencks, (newly returned from his agency in England) Hopkins, Williams, Venner, Tillinghast, Power, Richard, Brown and Sprague, were all Baptists; Whipple, an Episcopalian Waterman, Samuel Wilkinson, Burton, and the Harrises, were Friends.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Moody, of York, with as much power as any.

safety they have enjoyed, under the wise and good government of the place, and that they met with kind respect, and with numbers that gave a kind reception to their ministrations among them. These things we acknowledge with all thankfulness; and if such preaching should be continued among your people, (designed only for the glory of God and Christ Jesus in chief, and nextly for the promoting of the spiritual and eternal happiness of immortal souls, and the furtherance of a joyful account in the great day of judgment,) we earnestly request, as the Rev. Mr. Greenwood, in his lifetime, did before us, that yourselves, according to your power, and the interest and influence that God has blessed you with, will continue your just protections; and that you add such further countenance and encouragement thereunto, as may be pleasing to the eternal God, and may, through Christ Jesus, obtain for you the greater reward in heaven. And if ever it should come to pass, that a small meeting-house should be built in your town, to entertain such as are willing to hear our ministers, we should count it a great favor, if you all, gentlemen, or any of yours, would please to build pews therein, in which you and they (as often as you see fit) may give your and their presence and holy attention. And we hope and pray, that ancient matters (that had acrimony unhappily in them) may be buried in oblivion; and that grace and peace, and holiness and glory, may dwell in every part of New England; and that the several provinces and colonies in it may love one another with pure hearts fervently. So, recommending you all, and your ladies, and children, and neighbors, and people, to the blessing of heaven, and humbly asking your prayers to the divine throne for us, we take leave to subscribe ourselves, your friends and servants.

PETER THATCHER,	}	Committee of the Association. <sup>1</sup>
JOHN DANFORTH,		
JOSEPH BELCHER,		

Dated October 27, 1721.

The town of Providence sent them an answer, dated February 23, 1722, signed in their name by Jonathan Sprague; wherein they say:—

We take notice how you praise the love and peace that dissenters of all ranks entertain one another with, in this government. . . . We answer, This happiness principally consists in their not allowing societies any superiority over one another; but each society supports their own ministry, of their own free will, and not by constraint or force, upon any man's person or estate; and this greatly adds to our peace and tranquility. But the contrary, that takes any man's estate by force, to maintain their own or any

<sup>1</sup>Ministers in Boston, Dorchester and Dedham.



other ministry, it serves for nothing but to provoke to wrath, envy and strife. And since you wrote this letter, the constable of Attleborough has been taking away the estates of our dear friends and pious dissenters, to maintain their minister; the like hath been done in Mendon. Is this the way of peace? Is this the fruit of your love? Why do you hug the iniquity of Eli's sons, and walk in the steps of the false prophets, to bite with your teeth, and cry Peace, but no longer than men put into your mouths but you prepare war against them? . . . You desire that all former injury, done by you to us, may be buried in oblivion. We say, far be it from us to revenge ourselves, or to deal to you as you have dealt to us, but rather say, Father forgive them, they know not what they do. But if you mean, that we should not speak of former actions, done hurtfully to any man's person, we say, God never called for that, nor suffered it to be hid, as witness Cain, Joab and Judas are kept on record to deter other men from doing the like.

A reply hereto was printed at Boston, dated September 7, 1722, which did not pretend to deny the facts here mentioned; but made a great flourish upon a *word*, which was not in their first printed letter, but was the error of the press in a second edition; and then took occasion, from what they said about recording hurtful actions, to publish a copy of a sentence of Court against Sprague in Boston, April 28, 1674, "for reproaching and scandalizing the magistrates, and for lascivious carriage." And it insinuated that their complaints about persecution were because of such sufferings as this.

Sensible how the populace had been deceived by such arts, Sprague wrote a rejoinder, dated January 24, 1723, in which he makes some apology for taking notice of such an anonymous, reviling piece, which profanely sets the Court Records of Boston upon a level with God's infallible record concerning Cain and Judas; and informs us that one of the two witnesses against him, in that case at Boston, was afterwards brought to repentance, and joined the Baptist church he belonged to in Providence; when she asked and received his forgiveness, for wronging him in her testimony in that case. He also observes, that the affair was in his early days, before he made a profession of religion, when he really was

a vile sinner. And for the satisfaction of serious people, he says:—

My youthful walk I'll not commend,  
Nor go about it to defend ;  
But to God's glory do confess,  
I liv'd in sin and wickedness.  
Until God's love to me appear'd,  
His dreadful wrath I greatly fear'd ;  
But when I hear'd Christ's lovely voice,  
My heart within me did rejoice,  
That he for sinners freely dy'd,  
That sinners might be justify'd ;  
That all such sinners he would save,  
As mercy of him humbly crave ;  
And do obey his holy will,  
As 'tis declar'd in his gospel ;  
So on his grace do I now rest,  
And so must all that shall be blest.

But lastly, why do you strive to persuade the rising generation, that you never persecuted nor hurt the Baptists? Did you not barbarously scourge Mr. Obadiah Holmes, and imprison John Hazel, of Rehoboth, who died and came not home? And did you not barbarously scourge Mr. Baker, in Cambridge, the chief mate of a London ship? where also you imprisoned Mr. Thomas Gould, John Russell, Benjamin Sweetser, and many others, and fined them fifty pounds a man. And did you not take away a part of the said Sweetser's land, to pay his fine, and conveyed it to Solomon Phips, the Deputy Governor Danforth's son-in-law, who after, by the hand of God ran distracted, dying suddenly, saying he was bewitched? And did you not nail up the Baptist meeting-house doors, and fine Mr. John Miles, Mr. James Brown, and Mr. Nicholas Tanner? . . . Surely I can fill sheets of paper with the sufferings of the Baptists, as well as others, within your precincts; but what I have mentioned shall suffice for the present.

Mr. Sprague preached for many years to a small society of Baptists in that which is now the east part of Smithfield; and died in January, 1741, aged ninety-three. Mr. Comer knew him, and speaks of him as a very judicious and pious man.

As a further proof of the evil effects of coercive measures about religious worship, I shall here add some account of

John Rogers, of New London, and his followers, who are briefly described in Vol. I, pages 376—382. He intermixed a number of precious truths, with many things of a contrary nature. Governor Leete well observed, in a letter there published, that if Rogers and his party had been Governors in Connecticut, it might be doubted whether they would have allowed people so much liberty in keeping the first day of the week as a Sabbath, as the government there allowed to him and his followers in the opposite way. For Rogers, imagining that the law which required the keeping of that day established idolatry, was as zealous to pull it down, as the Jews were against idols in old times. And the sufferings which he met with, for his zeal about this and other religious matters, seemed to be his life ; until, to shew how strong his faith was, he went to Boston, and among the infection of the small-pox there ; but caught it, and came home and died with it, and caused the death of some others thereby. This, many might think was quite enough to open the eyes of his followers ; but it was far from doing it. Perhaps they might think he was taken away in judgment to them, for their coldness and negligence. Certain it is that Joseph Bolles now published a second edition of Rogers's book, entitled, "A Midnight Cry from the Temple of God to the Ten Virgins Slumbering and Sleeping ; Awake ! awake ! arise ! and gird your loins, and trim your lamps, for behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye therefore out to meet him !" Bolles wrote a preface to it, in which he says of the author, " For his religion he lost his wife and children, and suffered continual persecution, being near one third of his lifetime, after his conversion, in prisons. And in the seventy-third year of his age, he died in his own house, at New London, 1721." Hereupon his son, and others of that sect, set out afresh in zealous attempts to pull down the idol Sabbath ; and as a number of them came into Norwich, in their way to Lebanon, on a first day, having things with them to discover that they were upon worldly business, and meant to



appear against having that day kept as a Sabbath, they were seized by authority ; and on July 26, 1725, they were brought before Joseph Backus,<sup>1</sup> Justice of the Peace, who fined them according to law ; and refusing to pay it, they were whipped.<sup>2</sup>

Governor Jencks being informed of their sufferings, and that it was because they were going to Lebanon to worship, and to administer baptism, wrote a paper, giving some account thereof, as a warning to people against the Presbyterian sect, and set it up in a public place in Providence. The Justice having obtained a copy of that paper, published an answer to it ; a manuscript reply to which, in the Governor's own hand-writing, is before me. He does not pretend to reply to it all ; for says he :—

Such unchristian-like behavior, in giving them disturbance when at their public worship, if true, may justly be condemned by all sober people, and is that which never entered into my thoughts to justify, in John Rogers or any other man.

But says the Governor :—

It is very well known, to all the elderly inhabitants of Providence, that the Presbyterian governments in New England in general, and Connecticut in particular, have for a long time been using their utmost skill and endeavors to bring the greatest part if not all this little Colony under their rule and government. But finding themselves disappointed in the several measures they have hitherto taken, they are now (as is supposed by many others as well as myself) about to try one artifice more in order to obtain their desire ; and that is by sending in their ministers among us, under a pretence of doing good to souls ; whereas the design chiefly is, to gain such a party as may be sufficient to over-vote us in our elections, and so to gain the rule over us.

Experience has since given much greater light about these things than was then enjoyed in the country. In 1758, the

<sup>1</sup>Grandfather of the author.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>“ Some of the sect had previously been taken up in other parts of the county and fined five shillings per head for breaking the Sabbath ; and they now travelled in defiance of the law and its penalty, boasting that they could buy the idolaters' Sabbaths for five shillings apiece. But, on arriving at Norwich, they found, as Mr. Justice Backus observed, that they had *risen in price*, for, being taken before the said Justice, they were sentenced to pay a fine of twenty shillings per head, or to be whipped ten or fifteen lashes each. Not being able to pay, they were obliged to submit to the latter punishment.” Caulkins's History of Norwich, p. 271.—Ed.

Rogerenes published an abstract of the history of ancient persecutions in New England, with high encomiums upon those Quakers who returned and were hanged at Boston, after they had been banished on pain of death; and a reproof to their own society and others for their declension from that temper and spirit. Many were hereby stirred up to travel from town to town, and to interrupt others in their worship, especially in the year 1763. But when they did so, at Norwich and other places, the authority removed them away until their worship was ended, and then released them, without fine or correction; which had a much better effect than their former punishments. Indeed in New London, where most of them lived, Mr. Mather Byles was so uneasy at their surrounding his gate, and calling him a hireling, that in 1768 he made a bitter complaint that their laws were not put in full execution against said people; and for this and other reasons he resigned his pastoral charge there, and went off to Episcopacy. About which time, a number of the Rogerenes were seized in a clandestine way, and were scourged in a most barbarous manner; for which may all the actors or abettors thereof be brought to true repentance! An instance or two of late suicide among the members of the Rogerene church, gave a great shock to the rest; and a number of their children are now become agreeable members of other communities. And if all persons and societies were impartially protected by authority, and none but spiritual weapons were made use of, and they with due faithfulness, to propagate and support the Christian religion, who can tell how happy the effects would soon be?



## CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUCCESSION OF MINISTERS IN NEWPORT.—COMER BECOMES A BAPTIST, AND IS SUCCESSFUL THERE.—ATTEMPTS FOR A LIKE REFORMATION IN PROVIDENCE.—VILLAINY DETECTED AT SWANZEY.—HOLLIS'S AND WALLIN'S DEATH.—STATE OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES.—NEW ONES FORMED, WITH THE ORDINATION AND DECEASE OF SUNDRY ELDERS.

Some revival of religion among the Baptists, as well as opposition thereto, is now to be described. Mr. John Clarke was a chief leader in forming the first Baptist church in Newport, in 1644; and he continued their pastor until his decease, April 20, 1676. Mr. Obadiah Holmes succeeded him in that office, and died October 15, 1682. Near three years after, Mr. Richard Dingley, from Britain, by the way of Boston, became their pastor. An address of his to the church is before me, wherein he describes the duty of a pastor to his people, and of a people to their pastor, in a clear, scriptural light. About 1694, he left that church and went to Boston, and from thence to South Carolina. After his departure they had only occasional supplies till 1710, when they elected Mr. William Packom for their pastor, in whose ordination Elder Luther of Swanzeay assisted. In 1718, Mr. Daniel White, from Mr. Wallin's church in London, was chosen for colleague with Elder Packom; but as he was a strict Calvinist, disputes soon arose about doctrines, which were greatly increased by a leader in the church, who was an assign of Mr. Clarke's estate, and unfaith-



ful in his trust. Councils were called from Boston and Swanzezy upon it; and the Legislature of the colony were moved to put him out of that office, and to put another man into it; though upon further search they saw that this was not in their power. Therefore in 1721 they made a law, which requires all men who are entrusted with charitable donations annually to give an account of their proceedings therein to their Town Council, which is still in force. But a separation took place in that church, and White administered to one party for several years, till it dissolved, and he went to Philadelphia in 1728. A difference in sentiments about laying on of hands, and some other things, caused the rise of the second church in Newport, about the year 1656; and Mr. William Vaughan was their first minister, who died in 1677, and was succeeded by Thomas Baker, and he by John Harden, who died in 1700. In 1701 James Clarke was ordained their pastor, by the assistance of the Elders Pardon Tillinghast and John Brown of Providence. In 1704 Daniel Wightman was ordained a colleague with him; and they were successful, and much esteemed in their places to old age.

Mr. Comer, before mentioned, being at school at Cambridge, joined to the first church there in February, 1723. Ephraim Crafts, his intimate friend, had joined to the Baptist church in Boston just before. This, Comer thought was a very wrong action, and took the first opportunity he had to try to convince him of it; but after a considerable debate, Comer was prevailed with to take and read Stennet upon baptism, which gave him quite other views of the subject than he had ever had before. However he concluded to be silent about it; and as education was the cheapest at New Haven, he went and entered the college there in September, 1723, and continued a member of it until October, 1724; when infirmity of body caused his return by water to Boston; and a terrible storm at sea, with the death of a peculiar friend just as he arrived, brought eternity so directly

before him, as to spoil all his plausible excuses for the neglect of baptism. He informs us that those words of Christ, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels," had such influence upon him, that after proper labors with those he was previously connected with, he was baptized and joined to the Baptist church in Boston, January 31, 1725;<sup>1</sup> and concluded to pursue his studies in a private way. Four months after, he was called to preach the gospel,<sup>2</sup> and on May 19, 1726, he was ordained a pastor of the first church in Newport, colleague with Elder Packom,<sup>3</sup> and a great blessing was granted

<sup>1</sup> "January 31, 1725. This day I was baptized by the Rev. Mr. Elisha Callender, and was admitted into full communion with the Baptist church in Boston, having before waited on the Rev. Mr. Appleton of Cambridge, and discoursed with him on the point of baptism, together with my resolution; upon which he signified I might, notwithstanding, maintain my communion in his church: by which I discovered the candor and catholic temper of his spirit." *Comer's Manuscript Diary.*—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Comer was at this time teaching school in Swanzev. In his manuscript *Diary* he writes as follows: "Thursday, May 6, 1725. I set out from Boston to Swanzev to visit the church and to keep school if nothing hindered. Saturday, 8. I visited the minister, Mr. Ephraim Wheaton, and was invited by him to preach the next day; which I accepted, having been earnest with the Lord for the bestowment of suitable gifts and graces for so sacred a service. Lord's day, May 9. I began my public ministry in the town of Swanzev, in the congregation and by the request of the pastor of the church of Swanzev; from those words, I Peter, i. 16, 'Be ye holy for I am holy.' Thus, I hope in the sincerity of my soul, with a hearty and sincere aim to God's glory and the advantage of precious souls, I entered into the work of the sacred ministry. 'Who is sufficient for these things.' 'My grace is sufficient.'"—ED.

<sup>3</sup> While resident in Swanzev, Mr. Comer continued to share the labors of the pastor of the church there, preaching for him once each Lord's day. August 5, 1725, the church voted to invite him to remain with them and continue this service one year. At about the same time, he was invited to preach temporarily at Newport. A lack of unanimity in the action of the Swanzev church, together with the advice of his pastor, Mr. Callender, led him to accept the latter invitation. The following extract from Mr. Callender's letter of advice is quoted, both because of its bearing on the present matter, and as a valuable indication of the character and views of Mr. Callender himself.

"The first thing you have to do is to consider which congregation doth most want help, i. e., Swanzev or Newport; and then, where you may have the fairest prospect of doing good. These two things, I think, would determine me to go to Newport. And then, besides, some other considerations fall in, which should have their

upon his ministry in that town. Their first church had but seventeen members when he came there; to whom thirty-four were added in less than three years. And says Comer, "There was no public singing until I came, and by the blessing of heaven introduced it." Neither had they any church records, before he got a book, and collected into it

force; and they are these:—your own comfort in the benefit of conversation, of which, to be sure, there is greater choice at Newport; and then, again, as to your subsistence, which, as far as I can learn, is as like to be as comfortable at Newport as elsewhere. What other considerations you may have, I know not: but, upon the whole, I pray God to direct you. But if you incline to go to Newport, I must advise you to these things: 1. To study well all your public discourses and look upon it your business to compose sermons in a handsome style and good method. 2. Carefully avoid all controversy in the pulpit. 3. Be sure that you never enter into the contention that has been at Newport.

ELISHA CALLENDER."

Mr. Comer went to Newport November 1, and was called to the pastoral office there, November 15. After three months' consideration, he accepted the call, in these words:

"Newport, February 6, 1726.

"BRETHREN AND BELOVED IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: You have, some time since, solemnly called upon the Lord of the harvest, by humble and earnest prayer, that he would send forth a laborer into this part of his harvest,—such a one as might break the bread of life to you, and dispense the living oracles of the Holy One of Israel in this place. Hereupon you were directed to make choice of the unworthy instrument who now reminds you hereof.

"I trust, beloved, you have duly considered the awfulness of the call of a laborer to be improved in God's harvest; with the difficulties, discouragements and temptations such are exposed to. I have, also, seriously weighed, and humbly spread the case before the Lord, earnestly beseeching him to guide and direct me in so important and momentous an affair, in being an ambassador for Christ, to beseech sinners, in his name and stead, to be reconciled unto God. Hereupon, I have considered:

I. What the Lord Jesus Christ expects of such as preach the gospel.

II. What men expect from them.

I. What the Lord Jesus Christ expects; and here, 1. Christ expects they should be faithful in it. I Tim. 1. 11, 12. 2. Christ expects they should keep close to, and not vary from, his commands to them. I Thes. 2. 2—5. 3. They are accountable for all the acts of their office. Heb. 13. 17. 4. All such as are called are under obligation to preach the gospel. I Cor. 9. 16. 5. Christ expects his word should not be corrupted to please men. II Cor. 2. 17. They should keep close to, and not vary from, his institutions, in both the matter and manner and end of their ministry; that so they may say as Christ did when sent. John 7. 16. So Paul could say of what he delivered. I Cor. 11. 22, 23. So Timothy must keep what was committed to him. II Tim. 1. 14.

II. What men expect; and here, men expect that such should be examples to others, 1. In doctrine; 2. In conversation; 3. In faith; 4. In purity.

"I have also considered my own inability to perform these ministerial acts which



the best accounts that he could obtain of their former affairs.<sup>1</sup> Out of a manuscript written by their first pastor, he transcribed the Confession of Faith, mentioned in our Vol. I, pages 206—209. For his support he received eighty-five pounds in 1726, ninety-three pounds, twelve shillings, four pence, in

are incumbent on those who are thereunto called; of being the mouth of God's people to him and his mouth unto them; of admitting into, and ejecting out of, his visible kingdom, and of administering the seals of the covenant to his people. But while I was musing and ruminating hereupon, that precious promise took deep impression upon me, II Cor. 12. 9, 'My grace is sufficient for thee;' and that, Matt. 28. 20, 'Lo I am with you alway.' When I considered my small standing in the school of Christ, the tenderness of my years, the smallness of my experiences, the various temptations I am exposed to, and the greatness of the work I am to engage in, I was almost discouraged; but considering the necessity of this flock of Christ, I was moved to a compliance with your invitation.

"Therefore, beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ, I now, by the grace of God assisting me, resolve to improve my utmost strength that God may afford me in this place, by a compliance with your call to the work of the ministry among you. This I do in the name of the great God and the Lord Jesus Christ, in the presence of the elect angels, and of this assembly; promising by the help of the Holy Ghost, to perform the ministry you have called me to, agreeable to God's word, and your expectation, viz., to declare the whole counsel of God, and to keep back nothing, that I either do or shall know to be agreeable to God's will, from you; and to administer the ordinances of the gospel, baptism and the Lord's Supper, as God has prescribed in his holy word, without human alteration or unwarrantable tradition. So, brethren and beloved in the Lord Christ, I humbly beg your prayers to God for me, to help and assist me in a work of so great importance, which I should have laid before you, but the service of this afternoon [a sermon from II Cor. 2. 16] hath made it sufficiently manifest. So, devoting myself to the service of your souls and the souls of yours, in the gospel of Christ, whom I entreat, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, to make you all perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle you, working in each of you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory in all the church, world without end. Amen.

JOHN COMER."

At his ordination, Mr. Comer presented a confession of his faith, which he afterwards transcribed into his Diary. It is noteworthy that he followed the advice of Callender to keep clear of the former contentions of the church, by making no mention of those points known as the distinctive doctrines of Calvinism, the church having been divided on those matters. In one article of his confession, the result of which was soon seen, he declared his belief "that singing the high praises of God in the assembly of his people, is a divine ordinance, grounded in the New Testament, which the church of God should be in the due and diligent practice of." The Seventh-Day church in Newport was invited to assist in Mr. Comer's ordination, but, he writes, "A letter of denial was sent, because of our non-observance of the seventh day."—ED.

<sup>1</sup>He was very curious and exact also in recording other events. He observes that the year 1727 was a year of many remarkable occurrences. It was so for the death

1727; but not a third part of this last sum in 1728, because two leading members of the church, who disliked his close and searching ministrations, had influence enough to turn a great part of the society against him. At length Comer gave them an occasion, which they eagerly made use of, to crowd him out of his office in that church; for, without giving them any previous notice, he, on November 17, 1728, preached up the laying on of hands upon every member as a Christian duty, though not as a term of communion.<sup>1</sup> Upon the close of that year he says:—

This has been a year of great exercise to me. I have been as it were in the furnace of affliction. The difficulty in my flock has been heart-wounding, and sometimes almost confounding. But I see God's grace is

of rulers. King George I, died June 11; and in Rhode Island Colony the Hon. Edward Thurston, one of their Council [father of the present pastor of the second church in Newport] died in April; Governor Cranston, April 26; Deputy Governor Nichols, who was elected in May, died in July. From July 28 to August 7, the heat was so intense as to cause the death of many. Through the three first nights in August, the lightnings were constant and amazing. On September 26, was a terrible hurricane; and a more terrible earthquake October 29, which was followed with a smaller one in the morning of January 28, 1728. He first mentions the northern lights, in the evening of July 16, 1728, which were much greater on October 2, following. Dean Berkley arrived at Newport January 23, with whom Comer had an interview July 14, 1729. Governor Burnet came to Newport, in his way to Boston, July 12, 1728, and died at Boston, September 7, 1729. Several persons were baptized by way of immersion by Episcopalian ministers, as Mr. Carpenter, by Mr. Usher, of Bristol, January, 1725; Nathaniel Brown, and four others, at Rehoboth, by Mr. Piggot, of Providence, in July, 1726; A woman at Newport, by Dr. M'Sparan, of Narragansett, in November, 1728.—B.

“Mr. Comer's manuscript journal, two volumes, folio, is now deposited in the cabinet of the Rhode Island Historical Society. It is a curious production, giving an account of all the remarkable events with which he became acquainted, interspersed with prayers, religious reflections, &c. Mr. Comer had formed the design of writing the history of the American Baptists, and had collected many useful materials for this purpose, which were of great advantage to Edwards, Backus, and Benedict in their Histories.” Rhode Island Historical Collections, Vol. IV, p. 38.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>The records of the church state that the above-mentioned sermon was “full of reviling and hard censures upon the church, and was looked upon by them that were not of the church, as well as those that were, to be so in a great degree.” The following minutes are also taken from the church records:—“The church in their trouble sent a letter to the church in Boston, for their Christian advice, and when the letter was read before the church, and the advice of the church asked thereupon, their advice was this, That, inasmuch as we were all of one mind, and continued

sufficient for me. I am fully and clearly convinced that I should have fallen into many hurtful evils, if sovereign grace had not wonderfully prevented. Bless the Lord, O my soul! . . . . About this time I found my people so uncomfortable that we must divide from each other, which was exceeding grievous to me.

January 8, 1729, Mr. Comer was dismissed from his church; and the next day, he says, "I passed under hands by Mr. Daniel Wightman, and offered for transient communion until spring, or till I saw how God in his holy providence might dispose of me." A revival of religion in that second church in Newport began the fall before; and as Elder Clarke was above eighty, and unable to preach, Mr. Comer was received to preach one half of the Lord's days with Elder Wightman for two years. And above forty members were added to that church before he left it, which was the greatest increase they had ever received in such a length of time; at the close whereof they had one hundred and fifty communicants, being the largest church in the colony. For Comer's support the society gave him one hundred and twenty-nine pounds in 1729, and one hundred and forty-four pounds, twelve shillings, ten-pence in 1730. As Newport was the head town of the government, Governor Jencks went and lived there, in order more conveniently to attend upon the duties of his

fixed in our principles, so they advised us we would maintain our principles, though our minister should part from us, and advised us to continue in love and of one accord, and not give way to any unwritten tradition." "June 28, 1731. At a meeting gathered at the request of Mr. Comer, and by consent of our elder, William Packom, after some discourse with Mr. Comer concerning the difference that has been a long time between him and the church, Mr. Comer being sensible of his mistakes, desired forgiveness, and in particular his timing that discourse concerning laying on of hands, and in a sermon which he afterwards preached, which was very offensive to the church, charging them with such crimes as they were no ways sensible they were ever guilty of; which he desired might be overlooked. And it was agreed that all papers written on both sides, relating to the difference, might be produced and burned, which was accordingly done; and the meeting finished in love and peace, with prayer by Mr. Comer."

These extracts may indicate that the blame did not so exclusively belong to the church, as the words of Mr. Backus might imply. It is evident, however, from the papers of Mr. Comer, that he never ceased to regard the action of the church as unjust.—Ed.



office ; where he joined in worship and communion with said church, wherein Mr. Comer also now introduced regular records, which they lacked before. And as Mr. John Walton, a young gentleman of a liberal education, was invited to preach at Providence, where a like reformation might be hoped for, in the church whereof the Governor was a principal member, and opposition was raised against it, he wrote the following letter to Mr. James Brown, their pastor :—

Newport, March 19, 1730.

BELOVED BROTHER :—I am heartily sorry to hear of the difference in our church at Providence, about Mr. Walton's coming to settle there ; as also for the unkind treatment he there met with from some, especially considering he came not there with a design to impose himself upon the church, but at the request of several of the brethren. And why his coming there should be so strenuously opposed, as I understand it is, I cannot conceive. As to his singing of psalms, I have heard him say, he would not urge that as a duty upon the church. And if it were for that he might expect some allowance, by way of contribution for his support, it most certainly is an error in those who oppose that as a thing unlawful. For I think the Scriptures are very clear in that point, that it is not only lawful for a minister or elder that preaches the gospel to receive (by way of contribution) a competent maintenance, but also the duty of the church, according to their ability, to afford it to him ; and this I doubt not but I can fully prove by Scripture against all contradiction. And I believe there are several of my brethren who can remember, that Elder Tillinghast, (in his life-time) who was a man exemplary for his doctrine, as well as of an unblemished character, did several times in his teaching declare, that it was the duty of a church to contribute towards the maintenance of their elders, who labored in the word and doctrine of Christ ; and although for his own part he would take nothing, yet it remained the church's duty to be performed to such as might succeed him. And as to what Mr. Walton holds with respect to laying on of hands upon believers as such, I do not understand by him that he opposes it any other ways, than if it be performed for the obtaining the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost ; but he thinks it ought not to be any bar to communion with those who have been rightly baptized. And as I have been informed, by one or more of the ancient members of our church at Providence, that such was the opinion of the Baptists, in the first constitution of their churches throughout the colony ; and that such as were under laying on of hands continued their fellowship with those that were not, until one who was in great repute for wisdom amongst them did, in his teaching, declare, that the doctrine of laying on of hands was a doctrine of

devils, upon which a separation was made. And, as I was informed when in England, the separation there was upon some such like occasion. But further, as to Mr. Walton's receiving, by way of contribution, if the church in Providence can freely hold fellowship with him, and do account he may be serviceable to them in preaching, as well as instrumental of doing good to others, I cannot imagine why any one should oppose his receiving some allowance for his labor, from such as are free to give it, none being under any compulsion; for I think it is highly rational, if he leaves his own home, where he can, by overseeing the management of his farm, live honorably, and removes to Providence purely to serve his brethren, that they should consider him accordingly.

I am, with due regard, sir, your affectionate Christian brother,

JOSEPH JENCKS.

Elder Brown was of his mind; but Deacon Samuel Winsor took the lead of a party, who were resolutely set against what the Governor had proposed. A Council was called there, September 3, 1731, who advised them not to divide upon it; but at a meeting in October, Winsor and his party were for censuring Walton as a transgressor, for joining in prayer with Baptists who were not under hands. Elder Brown reasoned with them upon it, and said, "If we admonish brother Walton and set him apart, what will you do with others who hold that point as he does, as Elder Clarke, Elder Wightman, the Governor, and some others?" Their answer was, "We must go through with it." And Elder Peter Place of Smithfield, came and assisted in making an open separation in Providence church upon these points. And Winsor taught publicly, "That all those who took any thing for preaching were like Simon Magus." This account is taken from original writings of Elder Brown and others, now before me. And as he died October 28, 1732, aged sixty-six,<sup>1</sup> Winsor's party prevailed, and ordained him as the

<sup>1</sup>He was grandson to Chad Brown, one of the first planters of Providence; and son to John Brown, who was elected into their Council in 1665, and was afterwards an elder in Providence church. From Elder James Brown's son James, sprang the four brothers who are now very noted traders in Providence, and great promoters of learning, and of the Baptist cause there. Said elder's son Elisha was Deputy Governor of the colony in 1765, and his son Andrew was Justice of Peace in the State, and long an exemplary Christian in the Baptist church in Gloucester, until he died in peace, 1782.

minister of that church. Walton quitted the ministry, and followed other employments, whereby many were confirmed in their prejudices against him and his sentiments.

Perhaps a concise account of a piece of villainy, which was now detected at Swanzev, may be of service, to warn all others against doing the like. That town was first granted to five men, three of whom were Baptists; and they laid out sundry parcels of land, which they called pastors' and teachers' lots. They had a large and curious book of church records, which was brought from Wales; and the surveys of those lots were recorded therein. Barrington was originally included in Swanzev, and when it became a distinct town, they had their share of those lots for Pædobaptist ministers. In 1718 Richard Harden became both a deacon and the clerk of the first church in Swanzev; and was encouraged to build and make improvements upon one of those lots, near their meeting-house; and he was also a leading man in town affairs. Having such advantages, he was tempted with a notion, that by destroying the records of those lots, he could obtain that whereon he lived as common land. And, behold! all the records of Swanzev church, betwixt 1663 and 1718, were taken out of the book, and have never been recovered since! When the church came to know it, as the government was in the hands of Pædobaptists, they invited Barrington to join with them in suing for their rights, with an offer, that if they would be at proportionable expense, they should have two-fifths of what they recovered. The offer was accepted, and Harden was sued by a writ of ejectment, at the County Court, in July, 1730, and was cast. He appealed to the Superior Court in September; but was also cast there. By a reference the next year, he obtained one hundred and twenty-five pounds for what he had done upon the land, and was obliged to quit it; and he took to keeping loose company, and drinking to excess. Elder Wheaton, and a large part of his church, had been desirous of settling Mr. Comer with him, before Comer



went to Newport, but Harden's influence prevented it. O, what is man when left to himself!

The pious and liberal Mr. Hollis died in 1731. When the news of it arrived, Dr. Colman preached a funeral sermon for him, before the General Court at Boston, April 1; which was published by their order. The two professors upon his foundations in the college each published a discourse upon the occasion, and President Wadsworth wrote a preface thereto. Professor Wigglesworth says:—

By his frequent and ample benefactions, for the encouragement of theological as well as human knowledge among us, who are Christians of a different denomination from himself, he hath set such an example of generous, catholic and Christian spirit, as hath never before fallen within my observation, nor, so far as I now remember, within my reading.

Dr. Colman says:—

That which is singular in the piety and benefits of Mr. Hollis, unto these churches, was, that though he was not strictly of our way, nor in judgment with us in the point of infant baptism, yet his heart and hand was the same to us, as if we had been one in opinion and practice with him. And in this let him stand a teaching pattern and example to us, of a noble, Christian, apostolic spirit of love; which makes those that differ in lesser matters to receive one another to the glory of God, and a shining testimony against a narrow party spirit, which is so much the disgrace and detriment of the protestant interest, and which so early began among the apostles of Jesus, and was rebuked by him, even in John himself, that apostle of love and charity afterwards, who once said to Christ in a fret of zeal, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us, and we forbade him, because he followeth not us; but Jesus said, Forbid him not.<sup>1</sup>

We shall have occasion to remember this hereafter. In the mean time, the last letter that I have seen from Mr. Hollis's

<sup>1</sup>Crosby, Vol. IV, pp. 213—229.—B.

Thomas Hollis was born in 1659. At the age of twenty he made a public profession of religion. He was an enterprising and wealthy London merchant. His character for integrity and virtue was above reproach, and the testimonies to his simple and earnest piety are many and undoubted. Says Dr. Colman in his Funeral Sermon, "Mr. Hollis merits to be named among great men, and to stand before kings. He was one of those righteous men that should be had in everlasting remembrance. Like Araunah, he gave as a prince for the house of his God. And like David, the king, he set his affection, and prepared with all his might, of his own proper goods,

intimate friend discovers so much of the views and comforts of Christianity, in a near sight of mortality, that I shall annex it to the foregoing account. It was directed to Mr. Elisha Callender :—

London, November 10, 1732.

DEAR SIR :—I readily own that it was my turn to have wrote to you long before now ; but the long and threatening illness under which I have labored, for more than twelve months past, have so reduced me, both in flesh and spirit, that I have been incapable, great part of the time, of writing ; which will, I hope, plead my excuse with you. I am, through divine goodness, able to preach once a day on Lord's days, but hardly ever expect to get over my indisposition. It is a wonder to the doctors, and all others who saw my case, that I am alive. I could not for several months but expect to be removed ; but blessed be the Lord, I had a comfortable prospect of another world, and was rather grieved than pleased at the view of a return into this. Here methinks is nothing pleasant to the mind, but rather everything sullyng and discomposing. Why then should not those who have tasted divine grace, long to stretch and swim in the immense ocean ? How sweet is a drop here, therefore how ravishing must the full enjoyment be ! But, Lord, grant faith and patience, to wait thy time, even thy time, O Lord. I am glad to hear the baptized interest thrives, and wish that the power of religion were in a more flourishing condition with you than it is with us ; for surely Jacob is small and low. We have many controversies agitated, which seem to put a stop to the growth of pure religion and the power of godliness among us. National vice gains strength, but vital

of silver and gold. And this he did, not to us, no, be it known to us, nor for our sakes, but unto Christ, whose he accounted us to be."

The following quotation will show that Mr. Hollis was one of a family whose spirit and works were kindred to his own :—" Concerning the Hollis family, who, for nearly a century, continued their benefactions to Harvard College, we may here state in brief what Pierce and Quincy have given at length in their histories of the University. Thomas Hollis, the father of the 'benefactor,' was born in 1634, and died in 1718. His son, called, by reason of his donations to Harvard, Thomas Hollis, 1st, died in 1731. A second son, Nathaniel, died in 1738. A third son John, was a partner in business with his brother Thomas. Thomas Hollis, 2d, son of Nathaniel, died in 1735. The total amount of the benefactions of this family up to this date, 'exceeded,' says Quincy, 'six thousand pounds currency of Massachusetts, which, considering the value of money at that period, and the disinterested spirit by which their charities were prompted, constitutes one of the most remarkable instances of continued benevolence on record.' Thomas Hollis, 3d, was born in 1720, and died in 1774. His donations to Harvard College during his lifetime exceeded fourteen hundred pounds sterling. Timothy Hollis died in 1791, at an advanced age. He gave twenty pounds sterling for the library. Thomas Brand Hollis, the last of the benefactors, was born 1719, and died in 1804." Manning and Brown University, pp. 121, 122.—Ed.



religion is declined to a mere skeleton ; yet the Lord's arm is not shortened. Humble service attends you, from your affectionate, though at present afflicted, friend and servant,

EDWARD WALLIN.

All the letters of Mr. Wallin that I publish are carefully copied from the originals now in my hands. He finished his course with joy, in his fifty-fifth year, June 12, 1733.<sup>1</sup>

To return to our own history, I would observe, that Rhode Island Colony was first divided into three counties, in June, 1729 ; and in February, 1730, Providence was divided into the towns of Providence, Smithfield, Glocester, and Scituate. There were thirteen Baptist churches, most of them small, who now held annual associations<sup>2</sup> to promote discipline and communion among them, upon the six principles

<sup>1</sup>Crosby, Vol. IV, p. 394.—B.

Edward Wallin, whose name has often occurred in this history, held an honored rank among English Baptists of the last century. He was converted early in life. The fortune of his parents was too narrow to keep him at school, and he was hurried into business ; yet he found opportunity to acquire a considerable knowledge of Greek, Hebrew, and Oriental dialects. He had expressed no purpose of entering the ministry, but two churches at the same time invited him to the pastorate. He accepted the call of the poorer and less promising church, and earnestly devoted himself to the work of the ministry, bearing a large part of the burden of his own support by teaching school. His church was largely prospered under his ministry, and his influence outside his own immediate field of labor, was extensive and valuable. Rev. John Gill, in preaching his funeral sermon, spoke of him as follows :—“ He had a large experience of the grace of God, and a considerable share of light and knowledge in the great truths of the gospel. He had a heavenly skill to lay open the wretched and miserable state and condition of sinners by nature, and to set forth the glory of Christ in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. His language was plain and easy, though strong and masculine ; far above contempt, and yet free from the swelling words of vain rhetoricians. His reasoning was clear and nervous, his mien and deportment was grave, his address was with majesty, which at once had a tendency to command awe, engage attention, and strike the affection.” See Crosby, Vol. IV, pp. 390—392.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>These annual associations were commonly known as “yearly meetings.” Knight, in his History of the Six-Principle Baptists, states that the Baptist churches in Rhode Island began to hold yearly meetings about the close of the seventeenth century. Comer's Diary mentions the yearly meeting of 1732, and gives the names of ten ministers who were present. The churches were represented as in modern Associations, by their elders and delegates, and reported their condition by letters. Copies of several of these letters are preserved in Rev. S. Hall's Collection of Papers. One of these yearly meetings is referred to in Vol. I, page 521. See Manning and Brown University, p. 73.—Ed.

in Hebrews vi., viz., one in Providence, the Second in Newport, two in Smithfield, the Second in Swansey, and one in each of the towns of Dartmouth, Warwick, North Kingstown, South Kingstown, Scituate, Groton, New London, and New York. The two in Connecticut had introduced singing in public worship, to promote which their Elder Wightman published a little pamphlet; but it was opposed by many among other churches. One church in Newport held the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath as a bar of communion, and refused to assist in ordaining Mr. Comer, in 1726, on that account. Mr. Mumford, who first led them into that principle, introduced singing among them in 1677. In that, and in their sister church at Westerly, Comer says, were now about one hundred and forty communicants; and also, that general redemption was held by the majority of all those fifteen churches. The first church in Newport had now about fifty members, the first in Swansey, two hundred, and their sister church in Boston, eighty. These held to particular election, and did not make laying on of hands a bar to communion, and sang in public worship; and the above named were all the Baptist churches then extant, north of New Jersey.

Mr. Comer had held a correspondence by letter with ministers in New Jersey for several years; and in March, 1731, he went there by water, and visited their churches in Middletown, Piscataqua, Cohansey, &c. He went as far as Philadelphia; and upon his return declared great satisfaction, in the sight he had of the faith and order of those churches. On July 2, he said:—

I desired and obtained a dismission from the church where I had preached more than two years, because I was never settled there, and found that some could not bear my preaching the doctrines of grace.

In August he removed to Rehoboth, where, on January 1, 1732, he said:—

I begin a new year, in a new place, but not in a new employment; for my delight of soul is in serving my dear Redeemer in the sacred work of

the ministry ; which I prefer and esteem above and beyond every thing else ; though I acknowledge, unfit and unworthy in myself. Lord, who is sufficient for these things ? My sufficiency is alone of God, in whom I rest and rely continually. January 20, a Baptist church was gathered in Rehoboth ; and January 26, I was publicly installed pastor of it. Elder Ephraim Wheaton of Swanzev preached from I Thess. v. 12, 13, and gave me the right hand of fellowship.

A precious number of souls were hopefully converted under his ministry there. In June he visited Sutton and Leicester, and baptized Thomas Richardson, Daniel Denny, Esq., brother to Mr. Prince's wife of Boston, and six more. In July he preached and baptized a man in Middleborough.<sup>1</sup> November 30, he baptized fifteen persons at home, who were chiefly seals of his ministry.

Two learned ministers were now settled in Newport. Mr. John Callender, nephew to their minister in Boston, who had enjoyed the benefits of Mr. Hollis's donations in Harvard College, was ordained a pastor of the first church in Newport, October 13, 1731, colleague with Elder Packom, who died three years after. Mr. Nicholas Eyres, who was born in Wiltshire, August 22, 1691, and educated in the city of Bristol, became a Baptist after he came over to New York ; and he was ordained pastor of a small Baptist church there in 1724, by the two Elders Wightman. A collection was made in Newport, Providence, &c., to help them in building a meeting-house in that city. But in 1730, the church became much broken ; Eyres says, " Some of them deserted under a pretence of love to the principles of absolute election and predestination." Therefore he came and settled at Newport, October, 1731, colleague with Elder Wightman. Elder James Clarke, of that church, died December 1, 1736, aged 88, much esteemed by those who knew him.

<sup>1</sup>"An account of such persons that have been baptized by me, John Comer, in remote places from my habitation, from the year 1732. Sutton, June 18, 1732 ; Thomas Richardson, Daniel Dennie, Elisha Nevers, Martha Green. Leicester, June 20, 1732 ; Joshua Nichols, Abiathar Vinton, Bathsheba Nevers, Lydia Vinton. Middleborough, July 17 ; Benjamin Booth." Comer's Manuscript Diary.—Ed.



Mr. James Bound, a sensible Baptist, came over from England, and dwelt a while in Salem village, now Danvers, where Mr. Peter Clark was minister; who could not be content with personal disputes, but also frequently preached against the Baptist principles, when there were no others in the place that held them. Bound told him that it was an unfair way of treating mankind; but he persisted in it, until he turned a number of his people from his own way; who removed, and began a Baptist society in Sutton. Mr. Bound's son John married a member of Mr. Clark's church, and removed to that town, where the preaching of the Sutton minister for infant baptism turned her from it; and when Clark heard thereof, he wrote her a long letter upon the subject. This she communicated to Mr. Walton, and he wrote an answer thereto, and sent it in a sealed letter to Mrs. Bound. But by some means Clark got it into his hands, and published both letters, with animadversions thereon, in 1732. She told me that she never saw Walton's letter to her, till she saw it in print. How well this agrees with the gentleman, or the Christian, the reader will judge.

In December, 1731, an act was passed in Boston, for the Quakers only; which left out the affirmation, and five-mile limitation, and required the assessors in each parish, where any Quakers lived, to make an annual list of them, and to deliver it to their parish clerk by the 20th of July; and if any of them should happen to be omitted therein, two principal members of the Quaker society might certify the same to the assessors by the 10th of August; and they should also be exempted from taxes to the established worship. As the exempting laws for Baptists expired in 1733, Mr. Comer's people were immediately taxed to other teachers; and some of them were imprisoned therefor. But upon application to their Legislature they were released in 1734; and a like law was made for the Baptists as had lately been for the Quakers; though no penalty was laid upon their

assessors, for breaking those laws, which they frequently did.

The Baptist churches in Swanzev and Rehoboth met with sore bereavements in 1734; when Elder Wheaton died, April 26, aged 75; and Mr. Comer, the 23d of May following, before he had completed his 30th year. But how much did he do in a little time! A decline immediately followed, from which neither of those churches have fully returned to this day; though the first of them has lately done so in a great measure. On September 16, 1735, a Baptist church was constituted at Sutton; and September 28, 1737, Benjamin Marsh and Thomas Green were ordained joint pastors of it. The former was from Salem, and the latter from Malden; being an early planter in Leicester. And September 28, 1738, by mutual agreement, the brethren at Leicester, became a church by themselves, and Green their pastor. May 16, 1736, Elder Wightman, of Newport, baptized the wife of Mr. Nathaniel Mather, a Presbyterian minister of Long Island.<sup>1</sup> November 4, 1736, a Baptist church was formed in Brimfield;<sup>2</sup> and on November 4, 1741, Ebenezer Moulton was ordained their pastor;<sup>3</sup> who descended from a member of the first House of Representatives at Boston, in 1634, but who was a sufferer from the ruling party there three years after.<sup>4</sup>

March 24, 1738, a century after the deed of Rhode Island was given by the Narragansett Indians, Mr. John Callender delivered a sermon at Newport, which he published, with enlargements; containing the best history of that colony then extant.<sup>5</sup> His uncle at Boston was taken from his beloved flock the last day of that month; and he finished

<sup>1</sup>Eyres's Register.

<sup>2</sup>This church is now the Baptist church in Wales.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>He married the above named John Bound's widow.

<sup>4</sup>Robert Moulton, of Salem, who was one of those who were disarmed in 1637. See Vol. I, p. 69.—Ed.

<sup>5</sup>An Historical Discourse on the Civil and Religious affairs of the Colony of Rhode Island. By John Callender, M. A. Reprinted in R. I. Historical Collections, Vol. IV.—Ed.



his course in the following happy manner. March 21, he said, "When I look on one hand, I see nothing but sin, guilt and discouragement; but when I look on the other, I see my glorious Saviour, and the merits of his precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin. I cannot say I have such transports of joy as some have had, but through grace I can say I have gotten the victory over death and the grave." Being asked what word of advice he had for his church, he earnestly replied, "Away with lukewarmness! Away with such remissness in attending the house of prayer, which has been a discouragement to me: and I have been faulty myself!" The Boston Evening Post of April 3, says:—

Friday morning last, after a lingering sickness, deceased the Rev. Mr. Elisha Callender, minister of the Baptist church in this town; a gentleman universally beloved by people of all persuasions, for his charitable and catholic way of thinking. His life was unspotted, and his conversation always affable, religious, and truly manly. During his long illness he was remarkably patient, and in his last hours (like the blessed above) pacific and entirely serene; his senses good to the last. "I shall," said he, "sleep in Jesus," and that moment expired.

Mr. Jeremiah Condy, who took his first degree at Harvard College in 1726, after preaching a while in this country, went over to England; but he was now sent for from thence, and was ordained pastor of the Baptist church in Boston, February 14, 1739.<sup>1</sup> The third Baptist church in Connecticut was constituted and organized the same year in Wallingford. By reading Delaune's plea for the noncon-

<sup>1</sup>As in the ordination of Elisha Callender, so now in that of Mr. Condy, the Baptist church in Boston invited aid from the Congregationalists. The following letter was sent to the church in Cambridge:

"To the church of Christ in Cambridge under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Nathaniel Appleton:

"HONORED AND BELOVED IN THE LORD: This is to request you to send your Reverend Elders and Messengers to assist in the ordination of our elected pastor, on the second Wednesday in February next. A request of the like tenor with this, we have made to the churches in Boston under the care of the Rev. Messrs. Webster and Gray, and Mr. William Hooper.

"Honored and beloved, we heartily wish you all spiritual blessings in Christ

formists and other means, a number of people were brought to embrace their sentiments, and joined to the Baptist church in New London; but ordinarily met for worship at Wallingford, from 1731 till they had a regular dismissal on August 20, 1739; and after being formed into a distinct church, ordained Mr. John Merriam for their pastor. Mr. Edward Upham, of Malden, son to a member of the Baptist church in Boston, took his first degree at Harvard College in 1734; and after preaching at Springfield about two years,

Jesus, the glorious Head of the Church. We are, in behalf and by order of the Church, your affectionate brethren in the gospel.

SHEM DROWNE, Deacon,  
JOHN CALLENDER,  
JAMES BOUND,  
BENJ. LANDON,  
JOHN PROCTOR."

R. I. Historical Collections, Vol. IV, p. 37.

The following letter shows that this course of the Boston church did not meet with universal approbation:

"We, the subscribers, of the Baptist Church of Christ in Swanzezy, under the pastoral care of Elder Samuel Maxwell: to the Baptist Church of Christ in Boston, sendeth greeting, wishing grace, peace and mercy, in our Lord Jesus Christ, may be multiplied.

"BELOVED BRETHREN: We rejoice to hear that the loss of your minister is so likely to be made up in the settlement of another whom we hear you have chosen to supply the place of your deceased pastor. But we shall be sorry to hear that you make use of, or improve, other ministers of other persuasions in the ordination of him whom you have chosen for that work; for we believe it to be not agreeable to your own principles; for we suppose you do not look upon them as persons regularly baptized, and, for that reason, not qualified to ordain your minister; for we do not find by the rules of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ that any were received into the Christian church before baptism, much less to ordain others to the work of the ministry. Therefore we pray you to take it into your serious consideration, before you proceed; for if you proceed in that way, it will be matter of grief to us, and we believe to the whole church, and particularly to our brothers and sisters at Providence. Therefore, brethren, we leave these things to the blessing of Almighty God, praying that he would give you grace and wisdom in all things to do his will. So, not having opportunity to call the church together, we thought it our duty to send these lines, in love and good will towards you. So we take leave to subscribe ourselves, your beloved brethren in the bonds of the gospel,

JONATHAN KINGSLEY, &c.

Swanzy, February 8, 1738-9.

"Beloved Brethren, we desire that this letter may be communicated to the church before they proceed to the ordination of their pastor."

John Callender, of Newport, preached the Ordination Sermon, which, by request of the church, was published. R. I. Historical Collections, Vol. IV. pp. 19, 20.  
—ED.

a church was constituted there, October 14, 1740, and the next day he was ordained their pastor, by the assistance of Mr. Condry and Mr. John Callender.<sup>1</sup>

The exempting law for Baptists had again expired, and their church in Rehoboth, being afraid of further trouble, requested the town to vote them clear. This was considered of at a town meeting, January 24, 1740, when it was declared that they could not lawfully do it; yet at another meeting, February 13, they voted, "that they were willing to grant or agree upon a salary for the minister of the Baptist church the present year, in case the said Elder will accept thereof." For this they had no more law than the other, and it was evidently done to ensnare them if possible. In May following, said exempting law was revived, to continue seven years.

<sup>1</sup> "He was ordained by Elders John Callender, Jeremiah Condry, and Samuel Maxwell." Paper in Rev. S. Hall's Collection.—ED.

## CHAPTER XIV.

A REVIEW OF PAST DARKNESS.—OF LIGHT AT NORTHAMPTON.—AND EXTENSIVELY THROUGH THE LAND.—THE NATURE OF THE WORK DESCRIBED.—HOW FAR IT PREVAILED.—WRITINGS FOR AND AGAINST IT.—CLASSES AGAINST IT.—AND COURTS ALSO.—WHERE THE REAL BLAME LIES.

A very great change is before us, which some have called the Great Reformation, and others great confusion ; which diversity of opinion is no new thing. Concerning the founder of Christianity, some said, He is a good man ; others said, Nay, but he deceiveth the people. In 1680 a sermon was delivered before the corporation of the city of London, wherein the dissenters were accused of obstructing the cause of reformation, because they would not conform to the national worship ; and recourse was had to the severities of Congregationalists in New England, against the Baptists and others, to justify the severities that were exercised towards dissenters in England. Therefore, Dr. Owen published a book in 1681, wherein he observes, that all the reformation that has taken place since the rise of Antichrist, was produced entirely by these three principles, viz., taking the Holy Scriptures as their only perfect rule in all religious matters ; allowing each rational person to judge of their meaning for himself ; and holding that all the power of office and government in the church of Christ is derived from him, by his word and Spirit, to each particular church, and not by a local succession from any other power in the



world. And so far as any have declined from this last principle, he assures us that therein they have rejected a main reason of separation from the church of Rome.<sup>1</sup> If so, then New England was involved at this time in darkness that might be felt. Very few of the common people had any idea, that a person could have a right to the gospel ministry without a degree from college, any more than the Israelites could to the priesthood, who were not of the seed of Aaron. And so great and good a man as Mr. Jonathan Edwards warned ministers against breaking over this line,<sup>2</sup> even in the same book wherein he says, "It has certainly sometimes been so with our colleges, that instead of being places of the greatest advantage for true piety, one cannot send a child thither, without great danger of his being infected as to his morals."<sup>3</sup> A professor and a tutor of Harvard College, a little before this time, were convicted of gross immoralities.<sup>4</sup> And in 1738, a minister at Eastham, on Cape Cod, was deposed from his office for heterodoxy in principles; which affected others who were of his sentiments so much, that Dr. Charles Chauncy published a sermon upon liberty of conscience in 1739. And on June 9, 1740, he met with ten other ministers at Salem, and signed a paper in favor of that deposed minister; who owned to the world, that his belief was, "that men can do that, upon the doing of which they

<sup>1</sup>Original of Evangelical Churches, pp. 291—297.

<sup>2</sup>It has been thought by some that . . . the gospel ministry need not be limited, as it used to be, to persons of a liberal education; but some, of late, have been for having others, that they have supposed to be persons of eminent experience, publicly licensed to preach, yea, and ordained to the work of the ministry; and some ministers have seemed to favor such a thing. But how little do they seem to look forward and see the unavoidable consequences of opening such a door! . . . Not but that there may probably be some persons in the land that have had no education at college, that are, in themselves, better qualified for the work of the ministry than some others that have taken their degrees, and are now ordained. But yet I believe the breaking over those bounds that have hitherto been set, in ordaining such persons, would, in its consequences, be a greater calamity than the missing such persons in the work of the ministry." Edwards's Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England; Works, Vol. III, p. 380.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>Edwards's Thoughts, 1742, pp. 266, 350. [Works, Vol. III, pp. 380, 414.]

<sup>4</sup>Hobby's Defence of Whitefield, p. 20.

shall certainly be saved ; and that men's obedience is a cause of their justification.<sup>1</sup> A minister of the capital town in New Hampshire, says of the state of the churches at this time :—

No serious Christian could behold it without a heavy heart, and scarce without a weeping eye ; to see the solid, substantial piety, for which our ancestors were justly renowned, having long languished under sore decays, brought so low, and seemingly just ready to expire and give up the ghost. How did not only Pelagianism, but Arianism, Socinianism, and even Deism, and what is falsely called Free-thinking, here and there prevail ! The instituted means of salvation, in many places, were but lightly esteemed, and a horrid contempt was put upon the ministry of the word.<sup>2</sup>

And in England Bishop Butler said in 1736 :—

It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry ; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious ; and accordingly they treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.<sup>3</sup>

But God ever works like himself, even so as to demonstrate to all, that our help is in him, and not in any arm of flesh. Mr. Stoddard's doctrine had greatly prevailed in this country before his decease, February 11, 1729. His grandson, Jonathan Edwards, was settled a colleague with him two years before ; who has since been a chief instrument of reformation in our times. A revival of religion began under his ministry, near the close of 1733, which arose to such a height in the spring of 1735, that he entertained hopes of about thirty conversions among his people in a week, for six weeks together ;<sup>4</sup> so that scarce a grown person in the place remained unaffected, and many children were effectually

<sup>1</sup>Osborn's Letter to the Convention at Boston, July 7, 1743, pp. 6, 23.

<sup>2</sup>Shurtleff's Defence of Whitefield, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Whitefield's Life, Chap. II. [“Advertisement” to the first edition of Butler's Analogy.]

<sup>4</sup>See Edwards's Narrative of Surprising Conversions ; Works, Vol. III, p. 240.  
—ED.

called. Our Elder Clark, of Wilbraham, dates his conversion there, at that time, when about twelve years old. This work was powerful in several adjacent towns; and they had a less degree of it in a number of towns in Connecticut. Edwards's Narrative of that work was much esteemed in London, where a preface was written to it, by Dr. Watts and Dr. Guyse. In the mean time two scholars were converted in the University of Oxford, in 1733, who were furnished with such gifts, that one of them with his tongue, the other by his pen, were greatly instrumental of reviving doctrinal and experimental Christianity, through the whole British empire. Mr. George Whitefield, the first of them,<sup>1</sup> was ordained by the Bishop of Gloucester, June 20, 1736; embarked for Georgia in December, 1737; returned through Ireland to England a year after; embarked again for America in August, 1739; and travelled and labored with great success, as far northward as New York.

These things being heard of at Boston, where religion was at a very low ebb, earnest invitations were sent him to come over and help them. He therefore sailed from South Carolina, and landed at Newport, September 14, 1740, where he labored three days to good purpose; and then travelled to Boston, and as far eastward as York, to see the aged and pious Moody, who received him joyfully. After his return to Boston, he went up a hundred miles westward to Northampton, to visit our excellent Edwards, and from thence down by Hartford to New Haven, and away through the southern colonies, until he embarked from Delaware Bay, December 1, when he said:—

O my soul, look back with gratitude on what the Lord hath done for thee in this excursion. I think it is the seventy-fifth day since I arrived at Rhode Island. My body was then weak, but the Lord has much renewed its strength. I have been enabled to preach, I think, one hundred and

<sup>1</sup>The other was Mr. James Hervey, who was born near Northampton, in England, February 26, 1714. And after a very pious and useful life in the ministry, and many excellent publications in the cause of true religion, he died near the place of his birth, December 25, 1758.



seventy-five times in public, besides exhorting frequently in private. I have travelled upwards of eight hundred miles, and gotten upwards of seven hundred pounds sterling, in goods, provisions and money, for the Georgia orphans. Never did God vouchsafe me greater comforts. Never did I see such a continuance of the divine presence in the congregations to whom I have preached.<sup>1</sup>

As he went through New Jersey he prevailed with Mr. Gilbert Tennent to take a tour into this field, which was then white unto the harvest; who came to Boston in December, and labored in these parts through the winter. In their preaching, both of them laid open the dreadful evil and danger of hypocrisy as well as profaneness, and spake as plainly against unconverted teachers and professors as any other sort of sinners, and the effects were exceeding great and happy.

Some indeed tried to persuade the world, that the great change then made in the land was chiefly owing to the mechanical influence of their terrible words, gestures, and moving ways of address. Dr. Chauncy took much pains to put this color upon things. But Mr. Thomas Prince says:—

As to Mr. Whitefield's preaching, it was, in the manner, moving, earnest, winning and melting; but the mechanical influence of this, according to the usual operation of mechanical powers, in two or three days expired, with many in two or three hours; and I believe with most as soon as the sound was over, or they got out of the house, or in the first conversation they fell into. But with the manner of his preaching, wherein he appeared to be in earnest, he delivered those vital truths which animated all our martyrs, made them triumph in flames, and led his hearers into the view of that vital, inward, active piety, which is the mere effect of that mighty supernatural operation of a divine power on the souls of men; which only will support and carry through the sharpest trials, and make meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

<sup>1</sup>Collection of his Journals, p. 437. He was born in the city of Gloucester, December 16, 1714; and after a life of incessant labors, in Europe and America, he died at Newburyport, in New England, September 30, 1770. Mr. Tennent was born in Ireland, February 5, 1703. His father came over with his family, and was a Presbyterian minister at Neshaminy, in Pennsylvania; where he kept an academy, wherein a number of excellent ministers were educated. Gilbert was ordained in 1726, and after a very useful life he died at Philadelphia, July 23, 1764. President Finley published some account of him.



Of Mr. Tennent, Mr. Prince says :—

In private converse with him, I found him to be a man of considerable parts and learning ; free, gentle and condescending ; and from his own various experience, reading the most noted writers on experimental divinity, as well as the Scriptures, and conversing with many who had been awakened by his ministry in New Jersey, where he then lived, he seemed to have as deep an acquaintance with the experimental part of religion as any I have conversed with ; and his preaching was as searching and rousing as ever I heard. He seemed to have no regard to please the eyes of his hearers with agreeable gestures, nor their ears with delivery, nor their fancy with language ; but to aim directly at their hearts and consciences, to lay open their ruinous delusions, show them their numerous, secret, hypocritical shifts in religion, and drive them out of every deceitful refuge wherein they made themselves easy, with a form of godliness without the power.<sup>1</sup>

March 2, 1741, Mr. Tennent preached his farewell sermon at Boston, and came round by Plymouth, Middleborough, Bridgewater, Taunton, Newport, and Providence, and so returned home through Connecticut ; in all which places his labors had some good effect. Religion was much revived in Boston, Northampton, and places adjacent, in the fall and winter. In February and March, it was so in New Haven, Hebron, and Lebanon Crank. At their general election in May, Mr. Jedidiah Mills preached in a powerful manner at Hartford, from whence his fame spread extensively. Proceeding eastward in his labors, Dr. Benjamin Lord, of Norwich, hearing when he was to preach at Lebanon, ventured to appoint a lecture for him in his own pulpit on Tuesday, June 2 ; but Mr. Mills was otherways engaged, and Mr. Wheelock came and preached it ; and Mr. Mills came and preached there twice the Friday following. These were the first that I heard of those itinerant ministers. Such darkness had prevailed before, and many spake so freely of the light they now received, that the name of Newlights was soon cast upon them. But an old saint, who was converted under Mr. Flavel's ministry in England, but now lived at our Norwich, being asked what she thought of them, readily re-

<sup>1</sup>Christian History, Vol. II, pp. 384—387.

plied, "Newlights! It is new to such as never saw it before; but it is what I knew above fifty years ago." The work prevailed very powerfully in Norwich through the summer. In August, Mr. James Davenport, from Long Island, came there, where Mr. Eleazer Wheelock and Mr. Benjamin Pomeroy met him, and they labored incessantly for three days, and a great reformation was wrought in the town; and in this and the following year, that glorious work of divine grace prevailed, in a greater or less degree, in most parts of New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and many other places. A measure of it was granted to the Baptists in Boston, Leicester, Brimfield, Newport,<sup>1</sup> Groton, and Wallingford; but as the work was begun and carried on almost wholly by Pædobaptists, from which denomination their fathers had suffered much, most of the Baptists were prejudiced against the work, and against the Calvinian doctrine by which it was promoted. Though I find that Elder Robert Feke, of Oyster Bay, on Long Island, wrote to his brethren in Newport, November 29, 1741, and said, "God has begun a glorious work among us, and I hope he will carry it on. There have been seventeen added to our little band in about three months." And the work was powerful among the Baptists in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

All allow that many imperfections attended this revival of religion; but the great difficulty has been to determine what they were, so as to encourage what was right, and to guard against all that was not so. Mr. Edwards delivered a sermon upon this subject at New Haven, in September, 1741, which he enlarged and published,<sup>2</sup> with a preface by Mr. William Cooper, of Boston; and it circulated through the nation, and was much esteemed. But an anonymous answer to it was published at Boston,<sup>3</sup> which condemned Mr. Coop-

<sup>1</sup>Betwixt March and August, 1741, forty-eight persons were baptized, and joined to the Second church in Newport.

<sup>2</sup>The marks of a Work of the True Spirit. Edwards's Works, Vol. I, p. 525.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>This answer was commended, if not written, by Dr. Chauncy. See Chauncy's Thoughts, p. 332.

er's saying "Some of the *learned* and *knowing* among men have had those things revealed to them of the Father in heaven, which flesh and blood doth not teach." This writer said he could not guess who they should be. To which it may be replied, that Mr. William Hobby, of Reading, one of the eleven signers to the paper in favor of Osborn's Arminianism, Mr. Daniel Rogers, a tutor at Harvard College, and a number more of their teachers, freely confessed that they were blind guides, until they were savingly enlightened under Mr. Whitefield's preaching. Said writer discovered a great dislike of Cooper's saying "These fruits do not grow on *Arminian* ground;" and also of what Edwards wrote against unregenerate ministers. As no law could take place in the Massachusetts, without the consent of Episcopalians, Presbyterian ministers could not carry their power so far there as in Connecticut, where the whole power of making laws was in one denomination, who therefore improved their power in the following manner.

Governor Talcot died in October while their Assembly was sitting. They then elected a Cambridge scholar in his stead, who was strongly attached to their Saybrook establishment. By an order from their Legislature, a General Consociation from all the counties of that colony met at Guilford, November 24, and drew up sundry resolves; in one of which they say, "that for a minister to enter into another minister's parish, and preach or administer the seals of the covenant, without the consent of or in opposition to the settled minister of the parish, is disorderly." Mr. Robins, of Branford, had done so at New Haven before, for which other ministers had reproved him, and he had made some concessions to them therefor. In December he received a written request<sup>1</sup> from the Baptist minister in Wallingford, informing him, that Dr. Bellamy had preached in their soci-

<sup>1</sup>SIR: After suitable respects to yourself, this note is to inform you that Mr. Bellamy has been with us at Wallingford and preached in our Baptist Society, to very good satisfaction and success on several persons, both of our people, and those



ety to mutual satisfaction, and desiring that he would come and do the like. This request appeared agreeable, and he appointed a meeting for the purpose, January 6, 1742. But, two days before the time, a deacon from Wallingford brought him two letters, the one signed by forty-two men of that town, the other signed by Jacob Hemenway and Isaac Stiles, ministers who lived by the way, requesting him not to go and preach to those Baptists, without giving any reason against it, but only their desire. This did not appear to him a sufficient reason for him to violate his promise, and to disappoint a people who were desirous of hearing the gospel. He therefore went and preached two sermons there, with an evident good effect. Yet for so doing he was complained of as a *disorderly* person, to the Consociation of New Haven county, in their meeting of February 9. He inquired wherein the disorder lay, seeing he preached in a particular society, at the written request of their pastor? It was answered that said society was not a lawful society, but a disorderly company. He replied, that Governor Talcot had advised Wallingford collectors not to distrain ministerial taxes from them; and the authority sent them annual proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings, as to other societies. But as the Consociation thought themselves better judges of those matters than civil rulers were, they expelled Robbins from their Classical Court for preaching to those Baptists.<sup>2</sup> A son of the Wallingford minister was then a

of your denomination, with whom we desire to join heartily in the interests of religion, though we cannot in the form; so that it seems to be the desire of both denominations here, that yourself would oblige us with a sermon or two, as soon as you can after next week; and please to send me when. This is also my desire for the good of souls and the glory of God. Sir, yours in good affections,

Wallingford, Dec. 23, 1741.

JOHN MERRIAM, Elder.

A Plain Narrative of the proceedings of the Reverend Association and Consociation of New Haven County, against the Rev. Mr. Philemon Robbins, p. 4.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>His Narrative, pp. 1—6.—B.

“Resolved: That the Rev. Mr. Robbins’s so preaching was disorderly.

“Resolved: That the Rev. Mr. Philemon Robbins should not sit as a member of this Council for his disorderly preaching.” A Plain Narrative, &c., p. 6.—ED.



tutor in Yale College, of which David Brainard was a member; and the tutor having prayed more pathetically than usual with the scholars, one of Brainard's intimates asked him what he then thought of the tutor? "He has no more grace than this chair," said Brainard. The sentence was overheard, and carried to the rulers of the College; though the accuser could not tell who it was against. However they extorted this from his friends, and expelled Brainard out of the College just about the time that Robbins was expelled from their Consociation.<sup>1</sup> And more effectually to guard against such disorders for the future, a draught of a law was made, and ministers conveyed it into the Legislature at Hartford, in their session of May 13; who were not only prevailed with to pass it, but also to direct the heads of their College not to suffer any scholars therein who refused to obey it.<sup>2</sup>

AN ACT FOR REGULATING ABUSES, AND CORRECTING DISORDERS IN ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS.

Whereas, this Assembly did by their act, made in the seventh year of the reign of her late Majesty Queen Anne, establish and confirm a confession of faith, and an agreement for ecclesiastical discipline, made at Saybrook, Anno Domini 1708, by the Reverend Elders and [the] Messengers delegated by the churches in this Colony for that purpose; under which establishment his Majesty's subjects, inhabiting in this Colony, have enjoyed, great peace and quietness, until [till] of late sundry persons have been guilty of disorderly and irregular practices; whereupon this Assembly, in October last, did direct to the calling of a General Consociation, to sit at Guilford in November last, which said Consociation was convened accordingly; at which Convention it was endeavored to prevent the growing disorders amongst ministers that have been ordained or licensed by the Associations in this government to preach; and likewise to prevent divisions and disorders among the churches and ecclesiastical societies, settled by order of this Assembly; notwithstanding which, divers of the ministers, ordained as aforesaid, and others licensed to preach by some of the Associations allowed by law, have taken upon them, without any lawful call,

<sup>1</sup>Brainard's Life, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>See their reasons for expelling the Cleavelands, in 1744. Col. Hezekiah Huntington told me, that this law was prepared and sent in by ministers

to go into parishes immediately under the care of other ministers, and there to preach to and teach the people ;<sup>1</sup> and also sundry persons, some of whom are very illiterate, and have no ecclesiastical character or any authority whatsoever to preach or teach, have taken upon them publicly to teach and exhort the people in matters of religion, both as to doctrine and practice ; which practices have a tendency to make divisions and contentions among the people in this Colony, and to destroy the ecclesiastical constitution established by the laws of this government, and likewise to hinder the growth and increase of vital piety and godliness in these churches, and also to introduce unqualified persons into the ministry : and more especially where one Association doth intermeddle with [the] affairs that by the platform and agreement abovesaid, made at Saybrook aforesaid, are properly within the province and jurisdiction of another Association ; as by licensing persons to preach and ordaining ministers : Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Governor, Council, and Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, that if any ordained minister, or other person licensed as aforesaid to preach, shall enter into any parish not immediately under his charge, and shall there preach or exhort the people, shall be denied and secluded the benefit of any law of this Colony, made for the support and encouragement of the gospel ministry, except such ordained minister or licensed person shall be expressly invited and desired so to enter into such other parish, and there to preach and exhort the people, either by the settled minister and major part of the church in [of] said parish, or, in case there be no settled minister, then by the church or society within such parish.

And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if any Association of ministers shall undertake to examine or license any candidate for the gospel ministry, or assume to themselves the decision of any controversy, or as an Association to counsel or [and] advise in any affair that by the platform or agreement above mentioned [made at Saybrook aforesaid,] is properly within the province and jurisdiction of any other Association, then and in such case every member that shall be present in such Association, so licensing, deciding or counselling, shall be each and every of them denied and secluded the benefit of any law in this Colony, made for the support and encouragement of the gospel ministry.

And it is further enacted, [by the authority aforesaid,] that if any minister or ministers, contrary to the force, intent and meaning of this act, shall presume to preach in any parish not under his immediate care and

<sup>1</sup>Besides those before named, Mr. Samuel Buell travelled and labored successfully through the country, who has since enjoyed great blessings in his pastoral labors at East Hampton, on Long Island. Mr. James Sprout, born in Middleborough, since minister in Philadelphia, was another of those itinerant preachers.

charge, the minister of the parish where he shall so offend, or the civil authority, or any two of the committee of such parish, shall give information thereof in writing, under their hands, to the clerk of the parish, or society where such offending minister doth belong, which clerk shall receive such information, and lodge and keep the same on file in his office; and no Assistant or Justice of the Peace in this Colony shall sign any warrant for the collecting any minister's rate, without first receiving a certificate from the clerk of the society or parish where such rate is to be collected, that no such information as is above mentioned hath been received by him, or lodged in his office.

And it is further enacted, [by the authority aforesaid,] that if any person whatsoever, that is not a settled and ordained minister, shall go into any parish, and without the express desire and invitation of the settled minister of such parish, if any there be, and the major part of the church, or if there be no such settled minister, without the express desire of the church or congregation within such parish, publicly preach and exhort the people, shall for every such offence, upon complaint made thereof to any Assistant or Justice of the Peace, be bound to his peaceable and good behavior until the next County Court, in that county where the offence shall be committed, by said Assistant or Justice of the Peace, in the penal sum of one hundred pounds lawful money, that he or they will not again offend in like kind; and the said County Court may, if they see meet, further bind the person or persons offending as aforesaid to their peaceable and good behavior, during the pleasure of said Court.

And it is further enacted, [by the authority aforesaid,] that if any foreigner or stranger, that is not an inhabitant within this Colony, including as well such persons that have no ecclesiastical character or license to preach, as such as have received ordination or license to preach by any Association or Presbytery, shall presume to preach, teach or publicly [to] exhort, in any town or society within this Colony, without the desire and license of the settled minister and the major part of the church of said town or society, or at the call and desire of the church and inhabitants of such town or society, provided that it so happen that there is no settled minister there, that every such preacher, teacher or exhorter, shall be sent as a vagrant person, by warrant from any one Assistant or Justice of the Peace, from constable to constable, out of the bounds of this Colony.

The reader may here see how catholic those ministers were, and how concerned to preserve union and order in every part of that colony, and it doubtless would have extended much further, had their power been equal to their inclinations. But there were three things which lay much



in their way. They could not command the thoughts of the people, nor the pens of ministers in other governments, and were unable to move their own rulers to carry violence so far as they did their censures. The second itinerant minister whom they accused of making divisions and disturbances, published a sermon this year, which had an extensive circulation ; wherein he says :—

The proper cause of sinful divisions, is the [that] enmity against God and holiness, which is in the hearts of natural men, of every order ; being stirred up by the devil, and their own proud and selfish lusts. And very often natural men, who are the proper cause of such divisions, [are wont to] deal with God's servants as Potiphar's wife did by Joseph ; they lay [all] the blame of their own wickedness at their doors, and make a loud cry.

And as their common talk was, that to go over parish lines to meeting was going out of God's way, so that if any thought they got good thereby, they were deceived, Mr. Tennent says, " There are three monstrous ingredients in this [the] objection, namely, a begging [of] the question in debate, rash judging, and limiting of God." For they who would confine religious worship to lines which men have drawn, assume a power which is justly questioned, and thereby attempt to limit God ; and how rash is it to judge all those to be deceived who refuse a tame submission to such usurpations !<sup>1</sup> Mr. Edwards also now observed :—

If ministers preach never so good doctrine, and are never so laborious in their work, yet if at such a day as this they shew to their people that they are not well affected to this work, they will be very likely to do their people a great deal more hurt than good ; for the very fame of such a great and extraordinary work of God, if their people were suffered to believe it to be his, and the example of other towns, together with the preaching they might hear occasionally, would be likely to have a much greater influence upon the minds of their people, to awaken and animate them in religion, than all their labors with them. And we that are ministers, by looking on this work, from year to year, with a displeased countenance, shall effectually keep the sheep from their pasture, instead of doing the part of shep-

<sup>1</sup>Tennent's sermon on The great Danger of an Unconverted Ministry, pp. 16, 18.



herds, by feeding them ; and our people had a great deal better be without any settled minister at all, at such a day as this. . . . Those awful words of Christ to the Jewish fathers should be considered by us ; Matt. xxiii. 13 ; Wo unto you, for you shut up the kingdom of heaven ; ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. The times of Christ's remarkably appearing in behalf of his church, to revive religion, and advance his kingdom in the world, are often spoken of in the prophecies of Scripture, as times wherein he will remarkably execute judgment on such ministers or shepherds as do not feed the flock but hinder their being fed, and so deliver his flock from them ; as Jer. xxiii ; Ezek. xxxiv ; Zech. xi ; Isai. lvi., &c.<sup>1</sup>

How weighty and solemn are these considerations ! yet the imperfections and mistakes of the real servants of Christ, and the hypocrisy and apostasy of others, have often been caught at as a shield against the authority of truth in these respects ; as the following facts will further shew.

<sup>1</sup>Edwards's Thoughts, 1742, pp. 133—135.

## CHAPTER XV.

MISTAKES AND ENTHUSIASMS OF LEARNED MINISTERS.—THE USE THAT WAS MADE THEREOF AGAINST TRUE RELIGION AND LIBERTY.—ILL TREATMENT OF THE BAPTISTS.—AND OF THE LATE WORK IN GENERAL.—WHICH TREATMENT WAS CARRIED TO THE GREATEST HEIGHT IN CONNECTICUT.—STARS SWEEPED DOWN THEREBY.

Mr. Davenport derived his descent from the first minister of New Haven, and was son of a minister of Stamford in Fairfield county. He and Mr. Daniel Bliss, a lively minister at Concord, took their first degrees at Yale College in 1732, as Mr. Wheelock and Mr. Pomeroy did theirs in 1733, and Timothy Allen his in 1736; who all dated their conversion before these times. Allen was ordained at West Haven; but upon uttering some unguarded expressions, about how unprofitable the Scriptures were to the unregenerate, their Consociation deposed him from his office. Davenport was an instrument of great awakenings in many places; and no man before him ever labored to so good purpose as he did, among the Mohegan and Nyantic Indians; from whence also sprang a great work among the Narragansetts.<sup>1</sup> But having always lived among ministers who

<sup>1</sup>The Commissioners at Boston, for sending out and supporting missionaries among the Indians, sent Mr. Joseph Park to Westerly, upon that business, in 1733. In 1738 the east part of that town, where the Narragansetts chiefly resided, was set off by the name of Charlestown. But in nine years, he was not able to bring one English family, in those two towns, to set up family worship; nor above a dozen Indians to attend on his ministry. Until, being greatly enlightened himself, by means of those itinerant ministers, a revival began among his people, and a church of four-

claimed a like power in the Christian church, as the seed of Aaron had in that of the Jews; and being deeply sensible of the mischiefs which unconverted teachers do to precious souls, he imbibed a strong persuasion, that it was his duty to examine the ministers wherever he came, and to warn the people against hearing such as he judged to be blind guides. For these things he was taken up and brought before Connecticut Legislature, who sent him out of their Colony. Separations were hereby caused at New London, New Haven and Milford. And it was impressed upon sundry minds, that they must go their way forth, and erect a *shepherd's tent* at New London, to educate persons in for the ministry. Such a school was therefore opened, to which a number resorted, wherein Allen presided. And though he was once imprisoned for preaching, and others suffered much, it did but animate them the more. And Davenport must needs go and preach to the great metropolis of New England. Upon his arrival he had long conferences with the ministers of Boston and Charlestown; until on July 1, 1742, most of them signed a declaration, wherein they said:—

He appears to us to be truly pious, and we hope God has used him as an instrument of good to many souls; yet we judge it our duty to bear testimony against the following particulars. 1. His being acted much by sudden impulses. 2. His judging some ministers in Long Island and New England to be unconverted; and thinking himself called of God to demand of his brethren, from place to place, an account of their regenerate state, when or in what manner the Holy Spirit wrought upon and renewed them. 3. His going with his friends, singing through the streets and highways, to and from the houses of worship, on Lord's days and other days.<sup>1</sup> 4. His encouraging private brethren to pray and exhort in assemblies gathered for that purpose. We judge it therefore our present duty not to invite him

teen English members was formed in May, 1742: which was succeeded with so great a work among the Indians the next year, as brought many of them into that church, and a hundred of them usually to attend on his ministry. Christian History, Vol. I, pp. 202—210. Mr. Park died there March 1, 1777.

Stephen Babcock, a member of that church, became the pastor of a Baptist church in 1750, and continued so until his death in 1775.

<sup>1</sup>In this way of singing he was almost entirely singular, even from those who were otherwise engaged with him in the general cause.

into our places of public worship, as otherwise we might have readily done.

But this did not prevent his going to examine each of them, and then declaring publicly against them; naming some as unconverted, and comparing others to Jehosaphat in Ahab's army, and calling the people to separate from them.<sup>1</sup> He proceeded farther eastward in this way, and upon his return to Boston in August he was imprisoned and brought upon trial in Court, for slandering their ministers, but the jury judged him to be *non compos mentis*, and so acquitted him.<sup>2</sup> Separations hereupon took place in Boston, Ipswich and Newbury. After his return to Long Island, he was brought over to New London; where he and others were carried so far, under a notion of purging away all error, as to burn a considerable pile of books, that in their view were erroneous, near the town wharf, on Lord's day, March 6, 1743, just as people were returning from public worship. Norcott upon Baptism was cast into the pile, but was caught out by another hand. The next day, under a conceit of destroying idolatry, they collected a large heap of fine clothes and ornaments, but were hindered from burning them, partly by a gentleman's coming to Davenport, and assuring him, that if all he had idolized must be burnt, he must burn him first. Great confusion was caused by these things, and the "shepherd's tent" broke up soon after.<sup>3</sup>

Those who teach God's fear by the precepts of men, "watch for iniquity." Isaiah, xxix. 13, 20. And they had now got so much of it, as emboldened them to appear very openly against the work in this land. The annual convention of ministers at Boston, May 25, published their testimony upon this subject; and especially against "The spirit and practice of separation, from the particular flocks to

<sup>1</sup>Christian History, Vol. II, pp. 406—408.

<sup>2</sup>Chauncy's Thoughts, pp. 164—165.

<sup>3</sup>March 5, 1743, Mr. Prince and his son began a weekly publication, and continued it for two years, under the name of The Christian History; which is very serviceable in ours.



which persons belong, to join [themselves] with and support lay exhorters or itinerants.<sup>1</sup> This moved some friends to the late revival to publish an invitation, in the Boston papers, to all ministers who had favorable thoughts of that work, to meet there the day after the ensuing Commencement at Cambridge, to give their minds concerning it; and such as could not well come, were desired to send in their thoughts in writing. In answer to this request, about ninety ministers met at Boston, July 7, and elected a committee, to draw up a testimony and letter of advice to the churches, to be laid before them next morning. But twenty of them went off, and did not stay to hear it. Of those who stayed, forty-four signed it without reserve; wherein they testify, that a glorious work of divine grace had been wrought in this land, in the three preceding years; but advise:—

That *laymen* do not invade the ministerial office, and, under a pretence of exhorting, set up preaching; which, (say they) is very contrary to gospel order, and tends to introduce errors and confusion into the churches: that ministers do not invade the province of others, and, in ordinary cases, preach in another's parish without his knowledge, and against his consent.

Fifteen more signed it, with an exception in these words, viz.:—

We concur with the testimony, for the substance of it, excepting that article of itinerancy, or ministers and others intruding into other ministers parishes without their consent, which great disorder we apprehend not sufficiently testified against therein.

At the head of these was Dr. Colman; who twelve years before called it a fret of zeal, and a narrow party spirit, in the apostle John, to desire our Saviour himself to forbid others, because, said John, *they follow not us.*<sup>2</sup> The other signers to this exception were Checkley and Eliot of Boston, Fowle of Hingham, Baxter of Medfield, Carpenter of Hull, Bradstreet of Marblehead, Abbot and Prentice of Charlestown, Turrell of Medford, Dorr of Mendon, Park-

<sup>1</sup>Chauncy's Thoughts, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup>Colman's Sermon on the death of Thomas Hollis. See p. 25.—Ed.

man of Westborough, Eells of Scituate, Bass of Hanover, and Maccarty of Kingston. On the other hand, nine ministers were sensible that in many cases ministers might preach in the parishes of others without their consent, and that, "this liberty cannot be invaded or denied, without inhumanly invading the *essential rights of conscience*." These were Sewall and Prince of Boston, Diman of Salem, Chipman of Beverly, Emerson of Topsfield, Emerson of Malden, Goddard of Spencer, Weld of Attleborough, and Cotton of Providence.<sup>1</sup> Others were so much set against that liberty, as to procure the publication of the before-cited Connecticut law in a Boston newspaper.<sup>2</sup> And it was evidently the want of power, that prevented the enacting of such laws in the Massachusetts; notwithstanding all the obligations they were under to the Hollis family. Mr. Isaac Hollis, a pious Baptist minister near London, was now sending over liberal communications, towards christianizing the Stockbridge Indians, as Dr. Colman himself informs us.<sup>3</sup> Yet how were the Baptists treated here!

Mr. James Bound, John Dabny, and Thomas Boucher, from Britain, with John Proctor, a town schoolmaster in Boston, members of the Baptist church there, withdrew from it, and began another church in July; and Mr. Ephraim Bound (son to James) was ordained their pastor, September 7, 1743. The reasons of their withdrawal were because Mr. Condy taught Arminian doctrine, contrary to the original principles of the church, and also opposed the late work of God in the land.<sup>4</sup> Philip Freeman, member of a Baptist church in London, came over to Boston, and joined that new church; who sent an account of their principles and conduct to Dr. John Gill, which obtained his approbation, and a considerable present was sent them from Lon-

<sup>1</sup>Christian History, Vol. I, pp. 155—166, 198.

<sup>2</sup>Chauncy's Thoughts, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup>Christian History, Vol. I, p. 150.

<sup>4</sup>A fuller account of these matters will be given in a subsequent chapter.—Ed.

don. The increase of the Baptists in New Jersey soon after moved Mr. Jonathan Dickinson, the first president of their college, to write a dialogue upon infant baptism. It was printed both at New York and Boston, in 1746, but without any name to it. Mr. Freeman sent one of them to Dr. Gill, with a request that he would answer it. He did so in 1749, and began with these words, viz. :—

Many being converted under the ministry of the word in New England, and enlightened into the ordinance of believers' baptism, whereby the churches of the Baptist persuasion at Boston and in the country have been increased, has alarmed the Pædobaptist ministers of that Colony; who have applied to one Mr. Dickinson, a country minister, who, as my correspondent informs me, has wrote with some success against the Arminians, to write in favor of infant sprinkling.

In 1752, Mr. Clark, (who wrote against Walton twenty years before) published a reply to Gill, wherein he said, "In this introductory passage, there are several gross mistakes in fact, or manifest untruths." And he takes up above five pages, in trying to prove this charge; thinking, undoubtedly, that if he could prove him to be a false man in his introduction, his book might more easily be answered, in the opinion of most; who generally have men's persons in admiration because of advantage. He allows that Dickinson wrote against the *Sectaries*, and names as such the Quakers, Anabaptists, Arminians and Antinomians; not mentioning that himself was one of the eleven signers of the paper in favor of Osborn's Arminianism in 1740. The proofs for his charge against Gill consist in limiting his words to the Massachusetts, instead of all New England, and denying any great increase of the Baptists, so as to alarm the ministers; or that any in or near Boston sent to Dickinson to write upon that subject, (which was not affirmed.) But what shall we think of Clark? Gill was never here, and therefore might easily mistake the geography of the country; but his accuser was born and educated in it; and he says of that new church :—



They have set up an illiterate teacher. To this Separate society there have been, indeed, some few enthusiasts and Separatists from some churches in Boston, and from the adjacent parts of the country, who have joined themselves. . . . Besides, . . . I know of no other Baptist church, except at the outskirts of the province towards Rhode Island and Providence, where I am informed there are two or three societies that call themselves Baptist churches.<sup>1</sup>

Whereas, at the time when he wrote thus, there were two Baptist churches in Boston, two in Swansey, two in Rehoboth, and one in each of the towns of Bellingham, Sutton, Leicester, Sturbridge, Brimfield and Springfield. And how guilty must a man be, thus to misrepresent the state of his own province, in order to fix an odium upon a gentleman who never was in it! He unjustly accused him of holding conversion to be to a particular sect; but how many reproachful names does he himself cast upon dissenters from his own sect! "Arminians" is one of those names; whereas the largest addition to said church in Boston, that they had received from any one town in the country, was of a number of judicious Christians in Medfield, who refused to join in the settlement of an Arminian minister there, who has since been forced to resign his office, because of his having a child by his maid.

After the great earthquake November 18, 1755, Mr. Bound's lectures were flocked to from all parts of the town; and such a blessing was granted upon his ministry, that they had a hundred communicants in that church. His life was unblemished and exemplary, and he died with great peace in his own soul, and much lamented by others, June 18, 1765.

In 1742, Mr. Edwards published his Thoughts, in five parts; shewing that the work going on in the land was a glorious work of God; the duty of all to acknowledge and promote it, and the great danger of the contrary; wherein its friends had been injuriously blamed; what ought to be corrected among them, and what positively ought to be done

<sup>1</sup>Clark against Gill, pp. 1—6.



to promote the work.<sup>1</sup> Upon a view of which, Dr. Chauncy set off and travelled through New England, New York and New Jersey, to collect matter for an answer to him, which was published this year, with the names of three Governors, two Lieutenant Governors, many Counsellors, and in all above seven hundred men, as subscribers for it. Above three hundred pages in the book are taken up upon things that he said were of a bad and dangerous tendency in the land.<sup>2</sup> He ranks them under seven heads, namely, Itinerant preaching, Great terrors, Sudden light and joy, Censuring of others, Impulses, Confounding of many exercises together, and A spirit of error. Under this last head, seven particulars are named, viz., Holding that unconverted ministers could not convert others, Separations, Presumptuous depending upon the assistance of the Spirit, Assurance of Conversion, and of the time of it, Vilifying good works, and Not allowing sanctification to be an evidence of justification. And, lest all the bad stories he had raked together from every part of America, should fail of clothing these points with a garb sufficiently odious, a number are added thereto from Europe, and some from the dregs of popery. A touch upon what he says, about itinerant preaching, and rash judging, may give some idea how strong his arguments were. Against the former he brings 2 Thes. iii. 10—15; 1 Pet. iv. 15, and 2 Cor. x. 12—17; which condemn the eating of other men's bread for naught, acting as busy-bodies in other men's matters, and the commending of themselves, and going into another man's line, of things made ready to our hands. But by whom is this line drawn? by God or man? Teachers who are fond of support by tax and compulsion, and promote the use of violence towards such as follow not them, most evidently fall under the lash of these Scriptures.

<sup>1</sup>Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England; Edwards's Works, Vol. III.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>To be strictly accurate, only two hundred and ninety-eight pages of the work are on this head. Part I, which discusses it, reaches to page 332, but of these pages, the Introduction fills thirty-four.—ED.

According to Chauncy, rash and uncharitable judging was begun in these parts by Mr. Whitefield, "who," he says, "seldom preached, but he had something or other in his sermon against unconverted ministers." And why was this uncharitable? Because Dr. Cotton Mather said, "No man becomes a minister or a communicant in our churches until he hath<sup>1</sup> been severely examined about his *regeneration*, as well as conversation."<sup>2</sup> When was it so? This testimony was given in 1696; and how clearly does it prove that their practice remained the same in 1740! His other arguments are alike conclusive.

Connecticut had a more powerful way of reasoning. In October, 1742, they forbade the erection of any public place of education, without license from authority; and also debarred all teachers from any benefit of their laws for their support, who had not been graduated by some protestant college.<sup>3</sup> And on February 16, they issued a proclamation for a general fast, to be on April 13, 1743, to deprecate the judgments of heaven, for their iniquities,—

Particularly the great neglect and contempt of the gospel and the ministry thereof, and the prevailing of a spirit of error, disorder, unpeaceableness, pride, bitterness, uncharitableness, censoriousness, disobedience, calumniating, and reviling of authority; divisions, contentions, separations and confusions in churches; injustice, idleness, evil speaking, lasciviousness, and all other vices and impieties which abound among us.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"No man becomes a minister in our churches till he be first a communicant, and no man becomes a communicant until he hath, &c."—ED.

<sup>2</sup>Chauncy's Thoughts, pp. 42, 140, 142.

<sup>3</sup>These were separate enactments, and the latter refers to religious, and not secular teachers. The language is as follows:—

"Be it enacted, . . . that no particular persons whatsoever shall presume, of themselves, to erect, establish, set up, keep, or maintain any college, seminary of learning, or any public school whatsoever, for the instruction of young persons, other than such as are erected and established by law, without special leave from the Assembly.

"And be it further enacted, that no person that has not been educated or graduated in Yale College, or Harvard College in Cambridge, or some other allowed Protestant college or university, shall take the benefit of the laws of this government respecting the settlement and support of ministers."—ED.

<sup>4</sup>Chauncy's Thoughts, pp. 295, 296.

This was issued early enough to have influence in the choice of their Legislature. Colonel Hezekiah Huntington had been a member of their Council for three years; but at their election at Hartford, May 12, he was left out of it; and John Bulkley, Esq., was chosen in his stead; who sent Zebulon Waterman and others, of Colchester, to Hartford jail the summer before, for teaching and exhorting at a religious meeting. Waterman was soon after ordained the pastor of a Baptist church in Colchester. It was well known that Huntington was much engaged in the late revival of religion in the land, and that he openly testified against the persecutions therein. King William's Act of Toleration was adopted in Connecticut, in May, 1708, just before their Saybrook scheme was formed. But because it had been extended, by their County Court, to the dissenters in New Haven and Milford, it was now repealed, with a declaration, "that those commonly called Presbyterians or Congregationalists shall not take benefit of said law." And it was enacted, that none of other denominations should, for the future, be allowed the privileges of dissenters, but such as should, "before the Assembly, take the oaths and subscribe the declaration provided in the act of Parliament, in cases of like nature." And as Mr. John Owen, of Groton, was complained of, for having, in April before, preached against such proceedings, an order was given out to bring him before the Assembly, to answer therefor, at their next session. In the mean time a Presbyterian minister came from New Jersey, and preached at Milford; for which he was taken up on a Saturday. And as they spake of confining him until Monday, he said, "Sir, I hope you will not confine me from preaching Christ." "*That is what we took you up for,*" said the Judge. He was carried, as a *vagrant* person, out of that Colony; but then he returned and preached at New Haven. And as the people there had got into the way of concealing their ministers on week days, an officer came and seized this minister, at their meeting-house



door, on a Lord's day morning, and carried him off. Yet when he was let go, he returned again and preached to the people; an account of which being laid before the Assembly at New Haven, of October 13, they added another act, which required ministers who should so return, to pay the cost of their transportation, and to be committed until they should give a hundred pounds' bond, not to offend again in like kind. Such were their proceedings against a precious minister of Christ; whose name and subsequent title are. SAMUEL FINLEY, D. D., President of New Jersey College.

As Mr. Owen avoided being taken, and like complaints were exhibited against Mr. Pomeroy, orders were given to arrest them both, and to bring them to the next session of their Assembly. Accordingly, at their meeting at Hartford, May 10, 1744, Owen came with a humble confession, and they forgave him, he paying costs. Pomeroy was brought and stood trial for some hours; but was condemned and ordered to be committed till he would pay the costs, and bind himself for one year, in a recognizance of fifty pounds, not to offend again in like manner. He then yielded to their requirements. On July 28, Mr. Davenport signed a retraction of the four articles which were condemned at Boston, and of his enthusiasms at New London; which was sent to Mr. Prince to publish with all speed. He did so, but prefixed thereto an extract from an ancient author, who says:—

It is no uncommon thing for those who love God in sincerity, through an impatience with the bold impieties of wicked men, to transgress the limits of a regular zeal. And when this impatience betrays them into mistakes, for which they meet with too severe treatment, either from friends, or from men in power; instead of correcting only the irregular sallies of their zeal, they are apt to suppress the most regular and laudable expressions of it, and become lukewarm and indifferent.<sup>1</sup>

The sequel will demonstrate the propriety of this remark. In January, Elder Timothy Packom and Daniel Greene

<sup>1</sup>Christian History, Vol. II, pp. 234—240.



visited their Baptist brethren at New London and Saybrook, and baptized some persons at each place. At Saybrook the people laid some things across a stream on a Lord's day, to raise the water to baptize in. False charges were added to what was fact in the case ; and said two teachers, and several other persons, were seized and imprisoned at New London ; one of whom was a woman with a child at her breast. But the above evils were well exposed in a piece, entitled, "The essential rights of Protestants;" dated March 30, 1744. Col. Elisha Williams, the best President they ever had at Yale College, was the undoubted author of it ; though, being printed at Boston, it was sent as a letter from thence to a friend in Connecticut. Having described the origin, design and limits of civil government, he says :—

Man by his constitution, as he is a reasonable being, capable of the knowledge of his Maker, is a moral and an accountable being ; and therefore, as every one is accountable for himself, he must reason, judge and determine for himself. That faith and practice which depend on the judgment and choice of any other person, and not on the person's own [understanding,] judgment and choice, may pass for religion in the synagogue of Satan, whose tenet is that ignorance is the mother of devotion ; but with no understanding Protestant will it pass for any religion at all. . . . Ecclesiastical officers, . . . as they are Christ's officers, they have authority to teach men his mind in things pertaining to his kingdom ; so they have no authority to teach men any thing but the mind and will of Christ. It is a truth that shines with a meridian brightness, that whatever is not contained in a commission, is out of it and excluded by it ; and the teaching his laws only being contained in the commission, what is not his law is out of it, and by that commission they are excluded from teaching it, or forbid by it.<sup>1</sup>

And from hence he plainly exposed their persecuting laws and measures. But though this was printed at Boston, and dispersed in Connecticut, yet the ruling party had no eyes to see it, nor ears to hear it. We must maintain the good old way, was their cry, although what they so called was diametrically opposite to the first principles of New England. And though, for reasons before given, the Massachu-

<sup>1</sup>Essential Rights, pp. 8, 17.

setts could not go so far as Connecticut did, yet their disposition is conspicuous in what follows.

Mr. Peter Thatcher was the third minister of Middleborough, where he began to preach in September, 1707, and he continued their pastor until his joyful exit, April 22, 1744. He was much affected with Mr. Tennent's preaching in these parts, and labored earnestly for a reformation among his people, but with much sorrow of heart, until such a blessing was granted at a meeting, November 23, 1741, that about a hundred persons, professors and others, were greatly awakened; and the ensuing harvest was so great, that when he died they had three hundred and forty-three communicants, above half of whom were males.<sup>1</sup> The church met soon after, and elected a committee to manage their affairs, and in particular to provide preaching for them; but the parish committee, who were men of influence in the town,<sup>2</sup> were very opposite to the late work among them, and they counteracted the church in that matter. And when the church had voted to hear Mr. Silvanus Conant four sab-

<sup>1</sup>Christian History, Vol. II, pp. 77—96.—B.

Mr. Tennent preached in Middleborough in March, 1741. "Some half a dozen," says Mr. Thatcher, "were roused." "In the beginning of October following," he continues, "I proposed a day of prayer, and spake to my brother Shaw for his assistance. This was our errand to the throne of grace, to ask the outpouring of the Spirit on this dry fleece. That week, some of my lately awakened brethren obtained a visit from the Rev. Mr. Crocker. . . . The 23d day of November, Mr. Crocker came [again]. We began about one. He preached from Romans, 8. 1. This he opened largely; giving the characters of them that were in Christ; and inferred the misery of those who found not the characters in themselves of their being in Christ; there was nothing but condemnation for them; showing what that damnation was, &c. After sermon there was an exhortation delivered. Many now melted down. After the blessing, the people generally stayed, till some cried with terror, which flew like lightning into every breast; I suppose, none excepted. I have written accounts of seventy-six, that day struck, and brought first to inquire what they should do to escape condemnation. There were a number of professors of religion that day, whose lamps went out. They discovered there was no true oil of grace in them. . . . In a few days from that 23d of November, so greatly to be remembered, there appeared to be above two hundred awakened. . . . The work grew daily; the numbers were increased; near one hundred and seventy, the following year, joined to the church." Account of the Work of Grace in Middleborough; Rev. Peter Thatcher in the Christian History. See also Great Awakening, pp. 171—176.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Jacob Thompson, Benjamin White, Esq., and Captain Ebenezer Morton.

baths upon probation, they went and got another man to supply the pulpit the same days, the first of which was September 9; when Conant was permitted to preach in the afternoon. But on September 13 they received the following advice from a Council at Duxbury, viz., "that though it belongs to the church to lead the congregation in the choice and call of a minister to office, that it is the right, as it has been the custom of the several parishes (when destitute of a minister) to apply, by a committee chosen by the whole parish, to such person or persons as shall be recommended to them for that purpose; and we advise the gentlemen, and all concerned, to follow this laudable custom." The ministers who gave this advice were Eells of Scituate, Gay of Hingham, Lewis of Pembroke, Bass of Hanover, Perkins and Angier of Bridgewater.<sup>1</sup> And by these means, the body of the church were shut out of their meeting-house, with the minister they chose; and had no better place than a barn to meet in, until they built another house. And less than a quarter of the church called themselves the standing part, held the old house, and went on and settled another minister. Mr. Conant was ordained, according to their laws, by the advice of a council of five churches, March 28, 1745; and ministered there to good purpose, until his decease, December 7, 1777. Mr. John Cotton, then of Halifax, now of Plymouth, published a narrative of these transactions; to which a virulent answer was returned; both in 1746. Judge Oliver was of that opposing party; and he and others had such influence at Boston, that the church could not have any proper hearing there for about four years. But when that was once granted, and every man in the parish had liberty to choose for himself, and each to support the minister he chose, the opposers were soon sick of their minister, and in less than ten years he was dismissed, and their society soon after dissolved; leaving a loud warning to all against empowering the world to control the church about soul-guides.

<sup>1</sup>Morton against Cotton pp. 14, 15.



## CHAPTER XVI.

A DELIVERER RAISED UP IN AN UNLIKELY WAY.—HIS PREACHING AND SUCCESS.—THE DIVISION AT CANTERBURY.—SUFFERINGS FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL.—EXPULSIONS FROM COLLEGE.—THE TRUE STATE OF THE CONTROVERSY.—OPPOSITION TO WHITEFIELD.—NEW CHURCHES FORMED.—CLASSES AND COURTS AGAINST THEM.—BUT WERE DEFEATED.—ESPECIALLY IN THE BRANFORD CASE.

By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small? saith one prophet. Jerusalem hath none of her sons to guide her, saith another. And how much was this the case with New England in 1744? Although some of their ministers had been alive in religion, and had done a great deal to promote the power of it; yet they were agreed with formalists in confining the ministry to a college education, and in having it supported by tax and compulsion; therefore, none of them could now lead the church out of her Egyptian bondage. And where could such a leader be found? Could any man think of looking to the barren shores of Cape Cod for his birth, to the obscure village of Canterbury for his education, or to a bench of lawyers for his integrity and faithfulness? Of all things this seemed most unlikely! Yet such was the event. Mr. Elisha Paine, of Eastham, upon said Cape, removed with his family to Canterbury, and was one of the seven men who formed a church there, June 13, 1711. His wife was of the family of Deacon John Doane,<sup>1</sup> one of the early magistrates of Plymouth Colony. Mr. Paine had

<sup>1</sup>His daughter Abigail married a Lothrop in Norwich, where she was much esteemed, both for her capacity and her piety, until her death in 1735, aged 104.



four sons, whom he brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> The second of them dated his conversion about the time of the revival of religion at Windham, in 1721, and before the general revival, twenty years after, he was become one of the greatest lawyers in Connecticut, and was in very prosperous circumstances in the world. In one of his private papers he says:—

God hath so ordered it in his providence, that ever since I was a child I have had an inquiring mind after knowledge, of almost all sorts ; but religion bore the sway. I seemed to have a regard for good men, and therefore took great care to watch persons, especially to see how they kept the Sabbath. Before my conversion I had the curiosity to hear all the different worships in New England, and inquired into their principles, and observed their behavior, both in and out of their worship. And I saw so little, or rather nothing, of the power of godliness in any of them, that I was then, even in my carnal estate, afraid that the true religion was not in

<sup>1</sup>Three of the brothers, Solomon, Elisha and John, were well known New Light, or Separate preachers. Solomon Paine, pastor of a Separate church in Canterbury, Connecticut, from 1748 to his death in 1755, was one of the chief leaders in the cause. He seems to have been especially esteemed as a counsellor, and was often sent for from a distance to advise in the perplexities and practical difficulties of the new movement. He also defended the Separatists vigorously and efficiently with his pen, in a work several times quoted in this history, entitled, *A Short View of the Difference between the Church of Christ and the Established Churches in the Colony of Connecticut, in their Foundation and Practise, with their Ends.* John Paine, pastor of a Separatist church in Rehoboth, was evidently a man of ability and influence. But foremost of the brothers, and in many respects, of all who were engaged in the new movement, the first declared Separatist, the first man ordained as a Separatist preacher, and the first sufferer in the cause, was Elisha Paine. Earnest and devoted in piety, bold and determined in measures, zealous and impassioned in address, he was the herald who summoned to the new standard those who had already revolted from, or were disaffected in, the ranks of the Standing Order. In what Mr. Backus says of him, there may seem to be too much prominence given to one whose name is now so little known. But Mr. Backus, himself an early and ardent Separatist, would naturally cherish a high regard for the man in connection with whom, and largely through whose means, the cause first took form and became established. Moreover, at this day, the Separatist movement is not appreciated as it deserves. We have too nearly forgotten our obligations to those men who dared to break away from the corrupt and worldly churches of the Standing Order, though they were armed with all the power of the State, of which they were a part, and to establish other churches in which vital godliness was the condition of membership. It was a transition movement, it is true, and of necessity only temporary, but its results were enduring. Many of the Baptist churches in New England sprung from it directly, and through them, indirectly, almost all the rest ; and other evangelical churches are largely indebted to it for their vitality and efficiency.—ED.

this land. Yet worldly pleasure, and the form which was most acknowledged, would soon make me easy again. But when conviction came to lay hold of me, let who would be of the true religion, I saw mine was of no value.

In July, 1742, he received an internal call to preach the gospel, and in December following he offered himself for examination before some pious ministers; and they gave him encouragement about entering into that work, but were for his doing it upon the Saybrook plan, which he never liked. The church he belonged to had been destitute of a pastor near two years, when they met on January 27, 1743, and declared by vote, "that the platform of church discipline agreed upon by the Synod at Cambridge, in 1648, is most agreeable to the former designed practice of this church, excepting their having ruling elders as distinct officers, and most agreeable to the Scriptures;" though they did not withdraw their fellowship from the consociated churches. Soon after this Mr. Paine set out upon a journey; but for preaching the gospel in Woodstock, which then belonged to the Massachusetts, he was seized on February 19, by virtue of a warrant from John Chandler, Esq., of that town, and was imprisoned at Worcester.<sup>1</sup>

But his bonds proved to be for the furtherance of the gos-

<sup>1</sup>"Feb. 19. I was seized at the house of Mr. John Morse. Had liberty to sing the 23d Psalm. From thence I was carried (by Mr. Right [Wright] the officer) to the house of Colonel Chandler, of said town, [Woodstock,] who granted the warrant; who supposed that I designed to give bond as the warrant required. But before he sat down he put the question to me whether that was my design. I replied, I had not determined to do it. .... Monday, the 21st. Went to Worcester. Lodged at Captain Howard's. Saw Colonel Chandler, of that town, who offered to take bond according to the warrant; but it not being clear to me to give such bond, I desired until morning to consider of the proposal. But soon after I laid my head on my pillow, I had such a sense of the contempt that was cast upon the truths of God's word by the warrant, that I could not give bond. .... Invited to Colonel Chandler's, and breakfasted there the 22d, and then was committed into the dirtiest prison I ever saw. I begged a broom and swept a place to walk in. I had a sweet contentment in and resignation to the will of God, and have had ever since first taken. Blessed be God for it. After about an hour I was permitted to come and sit by the fire. Many persons visited, persuaded hard to give bail according to the warrant; Colonel Ward and many others offered to be my bail, but conscience forbade a compliance." Elisha Paine's Journal.—Ed.

pel, and he preached it to good purpose in prison. And on March 10, four ministers met at Lebanon, and signed a testimony in his favor; wherein, after mentioning the cause why he was not approbated in the preceding December, they say:—

From the knowledge we then had of him, we were of the opinion that he was qualified, and that it was his duty to preach the gospel. And we think it our duty to give our testimony for him, that he is, so far as we know or have ever heard, of a regular Christian life and conversation; and we esteem him sound in the faith, and of good understanding in the doctrines of the gospel of Christ.

ELEAZAR WHELOCK,  
BENJAMIN POMEROY,  
JOSEPH MEACHAM,  
SAMUEL MOSELY.

This, Mr. Mosely sent to him, in a letter, wherein he said:—

Dear Sir, stand fast in the faith; be strong. They that be with you are more than they that be with our adversaries. Never think it hard to suffer for Christ. It is enough for the servant that he be as his Lord.

Yet the next year all these men were overpowered by the enemy, so as to turn and act against him, in the great cause of reformation. On May 13, Worcester Court was constrained to give him a discharge, as having been imprisoned without law; and he went round and preached the gospel in the adjacent towns for a fortnight, and then returned home. July 8, he set off again and travelled to Providence, Bristol, Boston, Cambridge, and as far northward as Dunstable and Lancaster, preaching the gospel with great power; and returned home December 3, having, according to a journal he kept, preached two hundred and forty-four sermons in that journey. And hearing of the measures many were then pursuing, under a pretence of promoting peace and good order, he said:—

Let me speak freely of the peace that Connecticut was in. For these forty years we have had the name of a contentious people in the law. This was so customary, that to sue a man for debt was become not much



more than a compliment. And scarce a meeting-house has been set up for many years, without sundry petitions to the Assembly; with great heats [of] animosity, party against party, not in love, as is too well known to be denied.

And yet by their laws it was forty pounds fine for any people to set up a meeting-house without leave from Court. And, referring to what Daniel says of those who shall be corrupted by flatteries, he said of this time:—

I verily believe they know not what they are doing; for they seem to be zealous to maintain peace, but take the direct way to break it. Christ is a peaceable Prince, and Prince of peace; and if there was nothing in the way of his kingdom, it would be as peaceable here as it is in heaven. The Spirit is compared to water; water maketh no noise unless it is interrupted; so is the Spirit of Christ.

In June, 1744, he went and labored with success in his native country of Cape Cod, from whence sprang the Baptist church in Harwich.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The following letter will indicate the character and success of Mr. Paine's labors on Cape Cod.

“Chatham, July 3, 1744.

DEAR WIFE AND CHILDREN: I long to see you; and would write oftener but opportunity fails. I am purposing every day to come home, but dare not leave the Lord's harvest lest the wild beasts should devour and the wild boars should root up what the Lord seems to be doing here, with the greatest power that ever I saw here, or, I think, anywhere. The Lord is doing wonders in this sandy land; but as Christ triumphs, Satan rages. The Lord hath hitherto sustained me and delivered me from the rage of the adversary. O pray for me and the cause of dear Jesus. The pine woods in Harwich ring hallelujahs and hosannas, even from babes; I never heard the like before; from little ones from six years old and upwards, saying, “Hoiy, &c.,” “Hallelujah, &c.,” God is bringing of them in from the hedges. Our relations, the most of them, stand at a distance. Cousin Ebenezer Paine and his family seem exceeding opposite, except one daughter and her husband, I hope, are made to know Christ. Uncle Doane and his family seem to be created anew, except his wife. The world is full of lies, and falsehood is the covering wherewith the opposers cover themselves. The devil hath some very faithful servants in the country, that went from this place, that write the most awful letters that were ever writ; and as false as strange. But the Lord reigns, and the saints shout aloud for joy. The Christians, what few were alive, are much quickened and many added to their number since I came down. But the most wonderful shower began on the 28th of June,—a colony fast. I preached from Ez. 14. 3. and from Rev. 2. 21. After service we sang a hymn. I felt the Spirit of the Lord come upon me. I rose up and exhorted and persuaded them to come to Christ; and immediately there was a screeching and groaning all over the multitude, and hath ever since been very powerful. Some whole families, I hope, have received Christ, and others continually



Upon his return a division took place in Canterbury in the following manner. The parish had called a candidate there to preach, whom most of the church were not edified by. In August a committee of their Association met there, at the call of the parish, to give advice in the case. Mr. Paine was requested to give them his objections against said candidate, but he refused, because they were not called there by the church. Another member gave them a copy of their church vote against him; which the ministers in their result said "was signed in behalf of the *aggrieved part* of the church;" and advised the parish to go on and settle their candidate. For this, Paine, on September 12, wrote a smart reproof to one of those ministers, for wronging the truth, in calling that an aggrieved part, which was the church; and for encouraging the world to usurp such a power over the church of Christ. Hereupon he was disciplined by the secular arm. Their charge, his plea, and their judgment thereon, were as follows. Their charge was:—

That Elisha Paine, of Canterbury, in the county of Windham, who is not a settled and ordained minister, did, on the 10th day of April, A. D. 1744, go into the third parish in Windham, in the county aforesaid, and in said parish, in the house of Mr. Benjamin Cleaveland, there the said Paine did publicly preach and exhort in matters of religion, both as to doctrine and practice, to a great number of people then present, that were notified many days before.

Windham, ss.

September 22, 1744.

At a Justice's Court. Present, Nathaniel Huntington, Justice of Peace.

And now the prisoner at the bar being brought before this Court, for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, and exhorting a number of people, (as presentment) pleads, that this Court hath not jurisdiction of this case; for [that] the facts complained of are warranted by the law of God and the king, and therefore not triable by any Court or law inferior thereto; and this he is ready to verify judgment.

ELISHA PAINE.

crying out against their own hearts. I hope the Lord will carry on his work in his way, and by his own means. If it be his will to keep me here longer, let it not grieve your heart nor alienate your affection from me, for it doth not mine from you nor the children. The Lord keeps you all near my heart. And I hope you will not cease to pray for me, for I am in the midst of wolves and dragons; but God is above them all. So let us rest. Amen.

ELISHA PAINE."

This Court having considered the plea of the prisoner, do judge it insufficient; and say, that this Court hath jurisdiction of this case; and the said Paine refused to make any other plea; whereupon it is considered by this Court, that the said Elisha Paine shall become bound to the Treasurer of the County of Windham, in the recognizance of one hundred pounds, lawful money, to his peaceable and good behavior, that he, the said Paine, will not again offend in the like kind, between this time and the setting of the County Court, to be holden at Windham, in and for the County of Windham, on the second Tuesday of December next, and then appear at said Court on said day, and take up his bond, unless the Court shall see cause to continue the same; and pay cost of this prosecution, and stand committed until bond is given. Cost allowed, two pounds, thirteen shillings, old tenor bills. The said Paine refused to give bond as above mentioned, or any ways to comply with the judgment, and was committed the day and year above written.

NATHANIEL HUNTINGTON, Justice of Peace.<sup>1</sup>

By giving security to the keeper, he got liberty to preach in the jail-yard, which he frequently did to very good purpose. The day after one of those seasons, he wrote to his beloved wife and said:—

Take no thought for the morrow; the Lord will take care of all his. Be not at all concerned about what the world can do to me; for they are all chained fast, and cannot touch me but by leave of the blessed Jesus, and if you are not afraid of his hurting of me, then be not afraid of the worms of the dust. I trust the Lord is about to do some great thing. It was a day of conviction yesterday, especially among the little ones. I never had so great a sense of the Lord's being angry with the wicked, as yesterday morning. O may he pity you and all Zion! I pray God to keep you and me, and all his, from a wicked and perverse generation, among whom we dwell, and cause us to shine as burning lights. O may he cheer up our souls, humble our natures, by giving the victory to the spirit over the flesh! I know not when I shall be delivered from this pleasant house; I seem to be willing to tarry here just as long as my Father and your Father shall see cause to use me here; though I seem to have a strong persuasion that I shall not tarry here long; but how the Lord will bring it about I know not. Let us leave it to him, and wait with patience until the appointed time shall come. And if I go from prison to Paradise, it will be as sweet as if I went from a throne. I desire to commit you, myself, and all ours and his, to the wise disposal of a holy God. So farewell in the Lord Jesus. Amen.

ELISHA PAINE.

Windham Prison, October 8, 1744.

<sup>1</sup>Paine's View of the churches, pp. 20—22.

His persecutors soon found that their cause was weakened more by his preaching and conduct in prison, than out of it, and therefore released him about October 19. In the mean time, as their church at Canterbury had no way to avoid hearing a man they were not edified by, but by leaving the meeting-house, they withdrew and held their worship at another house. And two members of it, who had one of them been at Yale College three years, and the other newly entered, when at home in vacation time, met for worship with their church on Lord's days. For this they were convened before the rulers of the college in November; who, after hearing and considering of their pleas, said:—

Since the principal [end and] design of erecting this college, (as declared in charter) was to train up a succession of learned and orthodox ministers, by whose instruction and example people might be directed in the ways of religion and good order; therefore, to educate persons whose principles and practices are directly subversive of the visible church of Christ, would be contrary to the original design of erecting this society; and we perceive that it would be a contradiction of [to] the civil government, to support a college to educate students to trample upon their own laws, and break up the churches which they establish and protect, especially since the General Assembly, in May, 1742, thought proper to give the governors of the college some special advice and direction upon that account, which was to this effect, that all proper care should be taken to prevent the scholars' imbibing those or such like errors; and that those who would not be orderly and submissive, should not be allowed the privileges of the college. Neither can we conceive that it makes any odds, whether such pernicious errors are imbibed and practiced, and the laws of God and the civil government are broken, in or out of the vacancy of the town of New Haven; or with or without the concurrence of their parents, since the pernicious consequences thereof to the college and religion will be just the same.

THOMAS CLAP, Rector.

CHAUNCY WHITTLESEY,

JOHN WHITING,

THOMAS DARLING, Tutors.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Paine's View, pp. 15, 16.—B.

The two Cleavelands were expelled according to the following law of the college:—

“No scholar, upon the Lord's or another day, under pretence of religion, shall go to any public or private meeting, not established or allowed by public authority,



For these reasons Mr. Paine's two nephews, John and Ebenezer Cleaveland, were expelled from college; and three years after, the eldest of them was settled at Ipswich, and the other afterwards at Cape Ann. Paine was repeatedly cited to appear before the ministers of that county, to an-

or approved by the President, under penalty of a fine, confession, admonition, or otherwise, according to the state and demerit of the offence."

The college record of the transaction is as follows:—

"Yale College, November 19, 1744.

"Present, the Rector and Tutors.

"Upon information that John Cleaveland and Ebenezer Cleaveland, members of this College, withdrew from the public worship of God in the meeting-house in Canterbury, carried on by Mr. Cogswell, a licensed and approved candidate for the ministry, preaching there at the desire of the first parish or society in Canterbury, with the special direction of the Association of the county of Windham, and that they, the said Cleavelands, did go and attend upon a private Separate meeting, in a private house, for divine worship, carried on principally by one Solomon Paine, a lay exhorter, on several Sabbaths in September or October last; the said Cleavelands, being several times sent for, acknowledged the facts as above related, and justified what they had done, and gave in the reasons given in writing by the said Separatists for their separation aforesaid, the most material of which are these, viz.: 'That the first society in Canterbury keep up only the form of godliness, and deny the life, power, and spirituality of it, and had given Mr. Cogswell a call in order for settlement, whom they, the said Separatists, had declared to be destitute of those essential qualifications that ought to be in a minister of Jesus Christ, and therefore cannot join with the society in their choice, but look upon it to be their indispensable duty to choose one after God's own heart, one that will be able to comfort the wounded with the same comfort wherewith he himself is comforted of God, and not a blind guide; for then the blind will lead the blind into the ditch of God's eternal wrath; and many of the said society spoke evil of those things which the said Separatists received and held to be the effects of the Holy Ghost.' And the said Cleavelands say that this, being the act of the major part of the members, in full communion with the said society, is a sufficient warrant for them to join with them. They also say that the said Solomon Paine has sufficient knowledge and ability to expound the Scripture and to preach the gospel, and therefore has a right to do it. And therefore, say they, that in withdrawing from the public worship and attending upon the preaching of the said Solomon Paine, they have not acted contrary to any divine or human law.

"Whereupon it is considered by the Rector and Tutors—1. That we (depending in this matter upon the unanimous judgment of the Association in the county of Windham,) do judge that the said Mr. Cogswell is sufficiently qualified to be a preacher of the gospel, and therefore that the reflections cast upon him, as aforesaid, are groundless. 2. That if there were any reasons why the said Separatists should not choose to receive Mr. Cogswell as minister, or if it should be doubtful whether it is convenient that Mr. Cogswell should be ordained, where so great a number are against him, (which things properly belong to the hearing and judging of a council,) yet we can't see that this could be any justification of their setting up a Separation



swer to complaints they received against him ; but he knew their way too well to be drawn into their trap. Twelve of them met November 13, and drew up a paper against him and his brethren,<sup>1</sup> and published it in a newspaper. December 11, a larger number met, and published a pamphlet, as

in the mean time. 3. That neither the major part of the members in full communion, nor any other persons in any parish or society, have any right or warrant to appoint any house or place for worship on the Sabbath, distinct and separate from, and in opposition to the meeting-house, the public place of worship appointed by the General Assembly and the parish ; but, on the contrary, all such places and separate meetings are prohibited by the ancient laws of this government.

“Whereupon, it is considered and adjudged by the Rector and Tutors, that the said John and Ebenezer Cleaveland, in withdrawing and separating from the public worship of God, and attending upon the preaching of lay exhorters, as aforesaid, have acted contrary to the rules of the gospel, the laws of this Colony and of the College ; and that the said Cleavelands shall be publicly admonished for their faults aforesaid ; and if they shall continue to justify themselves, and refuse to make an acknowledgment, they shall be expelled.

“THOMAS CLAP, Rector.

“About a week after this, John Cleaveland gave in a paper, wherein he says, ‘I did not know that it was a transgression either of the laws of God or of the Colony, or of this College, for me, as a member of and in covenant with a particular church, as is generally owned to be a Church of Jesus Christ, to meet together with the major part of the said church for social worship ; and therefore beg and entreat that my ignorance may be suffered to apologise for me in that respect.’

“Upon which it was considered, that whatever might be in his former ignorance and mistake, yet, after all means of light and conviction, he still persisted in justifying what he had done, and would acknowledge no error in it, though sometimes he seemed to be brought to such a doubt and stand in his own mind as that it seemed probable that he would have made some acknowledgment if he had not been prevented by ill advice. And since the principal, &c.,” as quoted above. *Paine’s View*, pp. 12—15.--*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup>This paper commenced as follows :—

“At an Association of ministers of Windham County, convened November 13, 1744. This Association having taken into serious consideration the sad and deplorable state of the churches in several parts of the country, by reason of the woful degeneracy and corruption of the experiences of Christians, and the delusions which prevail over many poor souls, to that degree as to bring them to neglect, and, in a great measure, to set aside the ordinance of preaching the gospel, and forsake the public instituted worship of God, and cast contempt upon it ; and having humbly sought to God for light and direction as to our duty in this matter, and, as carefully as we could at present, inquired into the causes of it ; we are fully satisfied that, among other things, some of the chief apparent causes of the sins and distractions above referred to, have been the late unwarrantable attempts of Mr. Elisha Paine, Solomon Paine, Thomas Marsh, and others, who have, for some time past, and in divers places in this county, gone about pretending publicly to preach the gospel, to expound the doctrines of the Bible, and make public exhortations to the

a letter from them to their several societies, which at the foot of page 52 is signed by Joseph Coite, Ebenezer Williams, Joseph Meacham, Samuel Dorrance, Solomon Williams, Jacob Eliot, Marston Cabot, Samuel Mosely, Ephraim Avery, Ebenezer Devotion, Eleazer Wheelock, Abel Stiles, Stephen White, John Bass, Richard Salter, William Throope. A single passage therein will give a plain idea of the nature of their controversy. Having quoted Deut. xiii. 1—3, as a warning to the people against hearing Mr. Paine and his brethren, they say :—

The case here supposed is an attempt to draw the people to idolatry ; and this you will say is not your case ; these prophets and dreamers endeavor to draw you to Christ, and not from him. But then they endeavor to draw you from his institutions, to a way of worship which he has not instituted. Though the case is not so strong, yet the argument against your compliance is the same ; for whatsoever worship God has not instituted and directed in his word, is false worship, and therefore if there seem to be never so many appearances of God's power attending it, you may not go after, any more than after a false god.<sup>1</sup>

Now observe, Christ says concerning the field, which is the world, Let both grow together until the harvest. While he says to the church, Put away from among yourselves that wicked person. In agreement herewith Mr. Paine applied the first of these precepts to the State, and said, "The

people ; and, as far as we can find, having no better warrant than a persuasion of an inward call and motion of the Holy Ghost ; acting upon that principle that every Christian who has, i. e., who is persuaded that he has, an inward call, is sufficiently authorized for such an undertaking."

The paper proceeded to declare that this principle is "wrong and unwarrantable," and that no man is fitted to preach or make public religious exhortations "who is not qualified with a good doctrinal knowledge of the Scriptures, sound in the faith, of a good and blameless character, holy, and moved to the work of the ministry by the Spirit of God, by the voice of the church, and laying on of the hands of the presbytery ;" and that the forementioned practice must "end in Quakerism, open infidelity, and the destruction of all Christian religion, and make endless division in the Christian church till nothing but the name of it would be left in the world." It also mentions divers testimonies that Elisha Paine and the others before mentioned, besides lacking knowledge and gifts for the work of exhorting, "hold, or have vented some dangerous doctrines of fatal tendency to religion." The paper was signed by those whose names are given as subscribing to the pamphlet next mentioned, except Joseph Coite, Ebenezer Williams, Marston Cabot, and John Bass.—ED.

<sup>1</sup>Association Letter, p. 43.

church is to cast her tares out when they appear, or the whole church is leavened.”<sup>1</sup> But they contradicted him ; and calling the field the visible church, asserted that Christ would not let the servants “ go and root up the tares, even when they appeared.”<sup>2</sup> Thus those who use secular force in religious affairs, violate the divine command both ways ; they obstruct discipline in the church, and invade the rights of conscience and humanity in the State. This was remarkably verified in Canterbury ; for November 27, their church met, and sixteen males against twenty-three joined with the parish in sending for their Consociation to ordain Mr. James Cogswell there ; and the Consociation met for that purpose December 26, but not having the majority of the church for him, they could not get along according to their own laws. At length they called the parish together, and got them to declare, by vote, their willingness that the Assembly should set off those who did not choose him from supporting him ; “ and that they may have all legal privileges of a distinct religious society ;” and so went on and ordained him. Which proceeding, an advocate for them in 1771 called judicious, cautious, and gentle.<sup>3</sup> Yet thereby the first church in Canterbury was stripped of all legal privileges of a distinct religious society ; and because they desired no new incorporation from the Assembly, but only petitioned to be exempted from supporting a teacher they never chose, their petition was disregarded, their goods were torn away, or their persons imprisoned therefor, for fifteen years ; and the ministers who ordained him discovered no more compassion towards them than the priest and Levite did to the man that fell among thieves. This is the plain truth without any exaggeration.

New England now received a second visit from Mr. Whitefield, who came over in a mast-ship, and landed at York, November 2. But how were ministers alarmed at the news !

<sup>1</sup> Association Letter, p. 10.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 21.    <sup>3</sup> Fish's Examiner Examined, p. 76.



His first coming caused a great shaking among the dry bones ; what then could they look for in the present state of the churches ? An opposing party in Plymouth, disliking the preaching of the pious Mr. Leonard, had formed a new church there, and Dr. Chauncy preached at the instalment of their minister, five days after Whitefield landed ; when Chauncy said :—

I beseech my fathers and brethren in the ministry to mark this man who has caused divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid him. Turn your view, my brethren, into all corners of the land. Behold the confusion in towns ; the contentions in churches ! . . . Perhaps it will be said, these mischievous things are only accidental effects, and not to be charged upon him. So far from it, that they are the unavoidable consequence of that spirit in which he appeared.<sup>1</sup>

This is undoubted truth ; and the reader may judge of the nature of that spirit, by the foregoing and following facts. For the heads of Harvard College soon published a testimony against Whitefield, which was followed by another by an Association of ministers at Weymouth, January 15, 1745, and a third by an Association at Marlborough, the 22d. The like was done by many other collective bodies, and by individuals. And much pains were taken to persuade the world, that he was a dishonest man, especially because of his saying so much as he had done against unconverted ministers, while himself was a minister of the church of England. A number of answers were returned, by himself and others ; some of which we have mentioned under the year 1740. On May 28, 1741, the President of Harvard College<sup>2</sup> delivered a sermon before the annual Convention of ministers at Boston ; when, referring to Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Tennent, he said, “ Those two pious and valuable men of God, who have been lately laboring more abundantly among us, have been greatly instrumental in the hand of God to revive this blessed work ; and many, no doubt, have been savingly converted from the error of their ways, and many more have

<sup>1</sup>Sermon at Frink's Instalment, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. Edward Holyoke.—Ed.



been in some measure roused from their lethargy." But being now reminded of this,<sup>1</sup> his reply was, "Alas, how was I deluded with show and appearance!" And had he and the college now got free from delusion? In the eighth page of their testimony against Whitefield they say, "The believer may have satisfaction, that he hath the assistance of the Spirit of God with him, in so continual and regular a manner, that he may be said to dwell in him, and yet he have no feeling of it." But observe, to be *past feeling* is the depth of Pagan darkness; Eph. iv. 19. And one of the worst things that was now alleged against Mr. Whitefield, was his saying their colleges were in darkness that might be felt. Therefore it was ingeniously asked upon this occasion, why they need to produce the evidence of their own condemnation?<sup>2</sup> The heads of Yale College wrote a private letter to him, and he returned an answer, with several pamphlets upon the subject; but they were not satisfied therewith, and therefore published a declaration against him, dated February 25, 1745, wherein they say, "From these two principles which you have laid down, viz., that the generality of ministers are unconverted, and that all unconverted ministers are such baneful and pernicious men, it naturally and necessarily follows, that the people ought to discard them, or separate from them. If these two principles are right and true, we are satisfied your design is good, and we would readily join with you." But being of a contrary mind, they accused him of a design of rooting out the standing ministers of the country, in order to introduce foreigners in their stead, and asserted that he told Mr. Edwards a story of that nature,<sup>3</sup> This, Edwards publicly contradicted; neither is

<sup>1</sup>Whitefield's letter to that college, pp. 20, 21.

<sup>2</sup>Hobby's Defence of Whitefield, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup>Said declaration, pp. 6—10. The taking of Cape Breton this year was a very remarkable event. Governor Shirley first proposed the attempt to the Assembly at Boston. By a very small majority they voted to undertake it, and to request assistance therein from other Colonies, January 25; but the vote was no sooner passed than a general union appeared in carrying it into effect. And such dispatch was

there the least evidence since, of Whitefield's having any such intent. In August, 1745, I heard him preach at Lebanon, Windham, Norwich, Mohegan and New London; before which I had never seen him. He then spoke against separations; and his plan evidently was, to labor for the conversion and edification of souls, and to leave the building and government of churches to others. In 1768, the Corporation of Harvard College, with the same President at their head, gave him a letter of thanks for his benefactions thereto.

A year having rolled away, since Canterbury church was robbed of her rights, only for refusing to give up their judgment about soul-guides, to men who ruled with force and cruelty, without the least appearance of any design in them of relinquishing their claims, a number of teachers and brethren met at Mansfield, and having prepared a confession of faith and covenant, and given a verbal account of their experiences to mutual satisfaction, they signed covenant together, October 9, 1745. And they elected Mr. Thomas Marsh for their pastor, who had, for many years, been a deacon in good esteem in the second church in Windham; and his ordination was appointed to be on January 6, 1746. But he was seized the day before, and imprisoned at Windham, for preaching the gospel without license from the parish ministers. On the day he was to have been ordained, Mr. Elisha Paine preached a suitable sermon, to a great concourse of people, at the close of which about fourteen learned ministers came up, and tried to scatter that flock, after their shepherd was smitten; but they got no advantage against them. In February they chose and ordained Mr. John Hovey for their pastor, who ministered to them for

made, that an army consisting of four thousand and sixty men, under General Pepperell, rendezvoused at Canso, in April, where a small fleet met them, under the command of Sir Peter Warren. The army landed on Cape Breton April 30, to the great surprise of the enemy; and the strong fortress of Louisburg was given up to them on June 17, 1745. Old Mr. Moody, who went their chaplain, publicly declared a full belief that they should take it, before the army left Boston. Others went away saying, Pray for us, while we fight for you. That event was a great means of restoring peace to Europe, as well as America.

many years.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Thomas Denison was baptized in July, 1743, and was ordained pastor of a small church at Ashford the November after; but they dissolving, he retracted what is called re-baptizing, and had a chief hand in forming this new church at Mansfield; and he laid on hands and gave the charge, in this and several succeeding ordinations. They held the power of ordination to be in the church; but as others have made a great noise about a successive power in ministers, it is to be observed, that Elder Denison was ordained by Elder Moulton, and he by Elder John Callender, who was ordained by Elder Elisha Callender, in whose ordination three of the most noted Congregational ministers in Boston assisted in 1718. And this line was never broken, by any act of censuring or deposing, as was the case with dissenters from episcopacy, and also from popery. With my beloved mother, I visited Mr. Marsh in the spring, and found him comfortable in mind; but his body was closely locked up in prison; while a physician, who was put into a room over his head, for giving a single woman a potion to destroy the fruit of her womb, which destroyed her own life, was allowed, with an officer to attend him, to visit the sick in various parts of the town. How much was this like Barabbas and Jesus! In June Mr. Marsh was released, and in July he was ordained a colleague with Hovey; and many such churches were soon after formed and organized.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The first leader in these separations, and the first pastor they ordained, after much public service and conflict, fell asleep in the beginning of the late war. Mr. Paine was ordained at Bridge Hampton, on Long Island, in May, 1752, and preached to his beloved flock, until within fifteen days of his decease, August 26, 1775, aged 84. Mr. Hovey died, October 28 following.

<sup>2</sup>Solomon Paine was ordained at Canterbury, September 10, 1746; Thomas Stephens at Plainfield, September 11; Thomas Denison at Norwich-Farms, October 29; Jedidiah Hide at Norwich-Town, October 30; *Matthew Smith* at Stonington, December 10; John Fuller at Lyme, December 25; Joseph Snow at Providence, February 12, 1747; Samuel Wadsworth at Killingly, June 3; Paul Park at Preston, July 15; *Elihu Marsh* at Windham, October 7; Ebenezer Frothingham, at Wethersfield, October 28; Nathaniel Shepherd in Attleborough, January 20, 1748; *Isaac Backus* at Bridgewater, April 13; John Paine at Rehoboth, August 3; *William Car-*



The Consociation of Windham County had an account of many of these things laid before them, January 13, 1747; upon which they adjourned to February 11, and sent citations to the Elders Marsh, the Paines and Stevens, to return answers to accusations, then received against them. In the mean time the Consociation requested their own churches to keep a day of fasting and prayer, for divine direction. When they met again, they inserted a copy of the Mansfield articles and covenant in their result, with objections against many parts of it; one of which is in these words, viz., "Though most of us agree in the article of infant baptism, yet a difference in that particular doth not break the spiritual communion of saints; therefore it is no just bar to our covenanting and partaking of the ordinances together, wherein we are agreed." This the ministers objected against, as it tended "to let in Anabaptists, and seems (say they) more agreeable to the inclinations of parties than the word of God." And having inserted many reports and reflections against said people, the same were published at Boston, under the title of "The result of a Council of the consociated churches in the county of Windham, relating to the principles and practices of the several bodies of people in said county, who have separated from the communion of the churches in this land, and set up an uninstituted worship among themselves;" containing twenty-two pages in octavo. All their arguments proceed upon the supposition, without

*penter* at Norton, September 7; *John Blunt* at Sturbridge, September 28; *Ebenezer Mack* at Lyne, January 12, 1749; *Joshua Nickerson* at Harwich, February 23; *Samuel Hide* at Bridgewater, May 11; *John Palmer* at Windham, May 17; *Samuel Hovey* at Mendon, May 31; *Samuel Drown* at Coventry, October 11; *Stephen Babcock* at Westerly, April 4, 1750; *Joseph Hastings* at Suffield, April 17; *Nathaniel Ewer* at Barnstable, May 10; *Joshua Morse* at New London, May 17; *Jonathan Hide* at Brookline, January 17, 1751; *Ezekiel Cole* at Sutton, January 31; *Ebenezer Wadsworth* at Grafton, March 20; *Nathaniel Draper* at Cambridge, April 24; *Peter Werden* at Warwick, May 17, &c.

Those in *Italics* became Baptists afterwards; Drown, Babcock, Morse, Draper and Werden, were so before they were ordained. Draper was a graduate at Yale College, and the only person among them who had such a degree; and he deserted that cause two or three years after.



proof, that theirs were the instituted churches ; and, therefore that to separate from them was a revolt from God, and a rebellion against his government in the church. And for teaching and exhorting the people without their leave, the before-named Elder Frothingham was imprisoned five months, John Paine eleven months, and John Palmer from September, 1747, to January, 1748 ; all at Hartford. Solomon Paine was imprisoned a fortnight for that cause at Windham ; besides much more of like nature done to others. And only for being members and deacons in those Separate churches, three gentlemen, at different times, were expelled out of their Legislature ; namely, Captain Obadiah Johnson of Canterbury, Captain Thomas Stevens of Plainfield, (father to their minister) and Captain Nathan Jewett of Lyme. But overstraining their power weakened it ; and it now began to decline.

At the election at Hartford, May 12, 1748, Colonel Huntington was again chosen into their Council, out of which he had been excluded five years.<sup>1</sup> Solomon Paine came to this Assembly, with a memorial, signed by three hundred and thirty men ; praying for a repeal of all their laws, which debarred any inhabitants in the Colony from the liberty granted by God and tolerated by the king, or that the execution thereof might be forbidden. After long waiting, he had liberty to read, and speak to, the memorial in the Assembly ; and though it was then dismissed, yet some light was communicated thereby. In December, 1748, he was prosecuted at Windham Court, for marrying a couple of his own people. His brother came and pleaded his cause. The king's attorney, in pleading against Solomon, allowed that

<sup>1</sup>He was the fifth son of Deacon Christopher Huntington, the first English male that was born in Norwich, after it was planted in 1660. This son experienced an early conversion, succeeded his father in the deacon's office, and did much to promote a reformation in the town, in and after 1741. Henceforward, by annual and full elections, he was continued a Counsellor, and for a number of years the first man therein ; was Chief Judge of their County Court for twenty years, and a Judge of Probate, until he died in peace, February 10, 1773, aged 76.

he was ordained the pastor of a church of Christ in Canterbury, in as solemn a manner as could be ; but then pleaded that he was not a civil officer, because not chosen by the majority of the parish, which was the thing which made their ministers civil officers ; and he said it was in that capacity that they were supported by tax, and had power to marry persons. And upon this plea the case was turned against him ; and also another case at the same time against one of his society, about a tax to a legal minister. Hereupon Mr. Elisha Paine wrote an account of these proceedings to other ministers, to show the absurdity of their way of professing to be ministers of Christ, and to be supported in the name of the king of England, while their constitution differed essentially from the churches under either of those heads. At the same time they met with a great shock from another quarter.

As long as Mr. Robbins continued a regular minister, and yet was excluded out of their Consociation,<sup>1</sup> it served to weaken their power. A complaint was therefore received against him May 31, 1743, signed by six of his hearers, before he had any notice of who the complainants were, or what they complained of ; and a committee of ministers were appointed to go to him upon it. As soon as he discovered who the complainants were, he went and gave them satisfaction, and they wrote an account of it to said committee ; yet they came to him, and insisted upon his being reconciled to their Consociation. This he tried for, without success. However, perceiving what a storm was gathering, he drew three confessions, which he carried to another of their meetings ; wherein he went as far as he could towards giving them satisfaction, short of confessing that he broke the law of God in preaching to those Baptists, contrary to the desire of Presbyterians. But as he could not in conscience confess that, he returned home, without being reconciled to them. On May 29, 1745, a second complaint was

<sup>1</sup>See page 43.—Ed.

received against him, without his having previous notice of it, and another committee was sent, who prevailed with him to go and offer them a fourth confession; wherein he pleaded that his ignorance of its being a crime to preach to the Baptists as he did, might apologize for him, so that a reconciliation might be effected.<sup>1</sup> But they inform us, that instead of accepting what he had drawn, they drew a confession for him to this purpose, viz., "I, the subscriber, acknowledge, that I am sorry I preached *disorderly* at Wallingford, and prayed at the separation at New Haven, and promise not to do so again." And only because he refused to sign this, without explaining the word *disorderly*, they say, "The man appeared *stiff* and *self-willed* to the last degree."<sup>2</sup> Be that as it may, he then went home, and laid the confession they had rejected before his parish, who voted it to be sufficient, and desired him to continue in the ministry with them, and also that no councils nor committees might be sent there again, without their request. His church met November 4, 1745, and renounced the Saybrook Platform, and said, "We receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the only perfect rule and platform of church government and discipline;" but did not renounce fellowship with the consociated churches.<sup>3</sup> This in their view was worse than all he had done before; and a third and much larger complaint was received against him, and the Consociation was called to try the same at Branford, September 30, 1746. Their moderator sent a copy of the complaint to him, and said upon it:—

You, the said Philemon Robbins, are hereby, *in the name of Christ*, cited and required to appear before the said Consociation, at the time and place aforesaid, then and there to answer the several articles of the said complaint, and thereof you may not fail.

By NATHANIEL CHAUNCY, Moderator.

Durham, August 28, 1746.

<sup>1</sup>Robbins's Narrative, pp. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup>Their Answer. p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>Robbins's Narrative, p. 15.



Robbins drew answers to each article, and laid them before his people, who declared their satisfaction therewith; and his church appointed a committee to lay a copy of their votes before the council, and earnestly to declare against their jurisdiction over them. This was accordingly done; yet they resolved that they had jurisdiction over Mr. Robbins, and went on to hear accusations against him in his absence, and to condemn him in ten articles of his public teaching, without naming any witnesses, or any time or place when or where either of them was delivered. And concerning his conduct they say:—

He hath led off a party with him, to rise up against and separate from the ecclesiastical constitution of this colony, under which this church was peaceably established; reproachfully insinuating, in a church meeting, that under the Saybrook Platform it is King Association, in opposition to Jesus Christ, the only King of the church. . . . In which articles, upon mature deliberation, we judge said Mr. Robbins is criminally guilty of the breach of the third, fifth and ninth commands, and many gospel rules, for which he ought to give Christian satisfaction, by making a confession to the acceptance of this Consociation.<sup>1</sup>

This he was so far from doing, that he published a Narrative of the whole affair at Boston. They waited a year, and then met again September 29, 1747, and after telling of their lenity, and his obstinacy, they say:—

The Consociation do, *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, according to the word of God, and the powers invested in this Consociation, by the ecclesiastical constitution of this government, depose the said Mr. Philemon Robbins from his ministerial office, and ministerial and pastoral relation to the first church in said Branford, and debar and suspend him from communion in any of the churches. And this Consociation do hereby forbid the said Mr. Philemon Robbins to preach the gospel, or administer the holy sacraments, and suspend him from communion, in any and all the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, until he shall have, in a public and Christian manner, reflected on himself for the crimes and faults above mentioned, to the satisfaction of the Consociation of this county of New Haven.

The above voted:

Test,

SAMUEL WHITTLESEY, Jr.,  
ROBERT TREAT, Scribes.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Narrative, pp. 18—29.

<sup>2</sup>Their Answer, p. 117.



This is in an Answer to Robbins, said in the title page to be “printed for the Consociation and Association of New Haven County, 1748 ;” without any author’s or printer’s name. It represents, that when the Presbyterian and Congregational churches formed the Saybrook Platform, it became their own voluntary contract ; and that, being established by their Legislature, it became the ecclesiastical constitution of the whole colony, as much as their charter, which united the colonies of Hartford and New Haven in one, was their civil constitution ; and that Mr. Robbins and his church had no more right to renounce their jurisdiction, than his parish had to renounce the authority of the civil government of Connecticut ;<sup>1</sup> that a toleration was never intended to destroy an establishment ; and that as the Baptists he preached to had not fully complied with the Act of Toleration, they were not an orderly society, “but only a number of men that in a *disorderly* manner refused submission to their pastor.” And they accuse Robbins of intruding himself into the *bishoprics* of Mr. Whittlesey, at Wallingford, and of Mr. Noyes, at New Haven.<sup>2</sup> To prove which they quote the same Scriptures that Dr. Chauncy, their champion, had cited before ; one of which, they say, means “in plain English, his doing the office of a bishop in another’s diocese ; and this the apostle ranks with some of the greatest crimes ; I Pet. iv. 15.”<sup>3</sup> But who formed those dioceses ! Because Robbins laid his fourth confession, which they rejected, before his parish, who voted that it was sufficient, the Consociation observed, that a freehold rated at fifty shillings, or forty pounds, in the common lists, made every inhabitant a voter in such meetings, and from thence they exclaimed against him for that procedure, saying, “What if half the society were scandalous persons !”<sup>4</sup> Ay, what indeed ! how dreadful must the consequence be ! just such as Connecticut had felt for forty years ! For their laws made such votes equal to the

<sup>1</sup>Their Answer, pp. 86, 94, 112.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, pp. 6, 8, 106.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p. 101.

votes of the best saints among them, in the choice of their Legislature. And an Assembly thus chosen broke over their own law, and elected an ordained minister for their Governor;<sup>1</sup> by whose influence the Saybrook scheme was formed and established, without allowing the churches liberty to say whether their ministers should meet to form it or not. And now, because Mr. Robbins continued to preach the gospel to his people, a complaint was carried to their Legislature against him, with a prayer that he might be turned out of his pulpit, so that a regular man might be introduced in his stead. This was so far from being granted, that a council was appointed out of other counties, who prevailed with said Consociation to restore Mr. Robbins to a seat with them, which he held until his death in 1781; but his church sent no messengers with him. In October, 1749, their Assembly revived their act concerning the Saybrook establishment in 1706 and their acts in 1729, to exempt Quakers and Baptists from it; and ordered a new edition of their laws, which was printed in 1750; out of which were excluded all their persecuting acts since the late revival of religion, without a formal repeal of any of them. Governor Wolcot published a pamphlet against the Saybrook scheme. Governor Fitch published another to explain away its power; and it has been upon the decline ever since.

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I. p. 469.—ED.



## CHAPTER XVII.

ERRORS AND DIFFICULTIES AMONG THE SEPARATES.—UNJUST TREATMENT OF THEM.—EDWARDS'S CASE.—INCREASE AND SUFFERINGS OF THE BAPTISTS.—OTHERS OPPRESSED.—THE EVIL THEREOF WELL EXPOSED.—AGENTS SENT TO ENGLAND AGAINST IT.

Reformation has ever been attended with great difficulties. Declension is natural to fallen men, but a return to the right way is not so. When Israel came out of Egypt, a mixed multitude went up. And when David withdrew from Saul's tyranny, many resorted to him, not only of his kindred, but also "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented;" yet when it was said of his cause in general, "There be many servants nowadays that break away, every man from his master," the Scripture calls it *railing*, and gives the person who uttered it the character of a fool or madman. But how full is our world of such folly and madness! David became the captain of those who resorted to him; but the people, who now came out from the above described tyranny over the churches, had no such commander. Even the father who led them out had too much knowledge, and cautious deliberation, to be long followed as their chief guide; and he retired to a distant island, and settled there. Such evils had been practiced under the name of learning, orthodoxy and regularity, that many were prejudiced against the truth of what others falsely called by those names. Christian liberty had been so much invaded, that many ran into licentiousness to avoid



tyranny. The right which the gospel gives to all saints, freely to improve their several gifts, for mutual edification, had been so much denied, that frequent instances were now seen, of persons putting themselves forward in exercises which they had not a gift for ; being so earnest to maintain the liberty of speaking, as not duly to regard others' right of judging. And as some precious ministers had evidently lost much of their former life and freedom, by their attempts to correct errors, disorders and imprudences, a number of pious souls were afraid of appearing against almost any thing that wore the garb of power and life in religion. The example of the Erskines in Scotland, who came out of their national church for reformation, and yet rejected Mr. Whitefield, because he would not come into all their measures, was held up as a warning here, against stopping in what any had already attained to. And just in this juncture a man came from Windham to Norwich, in the summer of 1746, with a proclamation of liberty, and an opening of the latter day glory ; exclaiming against the legal bondage of praying every night and morning in families, whether persons felt a spirit of prayer or not ; declaring that if they had not a spirit of prayer, God did not then call them to pray ; and so of other duties. In this way sundry persons, chiefly at Windham, proceeded, until they asserted that they had passed the first resurrection, and were perfect and immortal ; and one of them declared that he was Christ. But this spirit soon carried them into knavery in temporal dealings, intemperance, and what not ? About the beginning of 1748, some people in Cumberland advanced the opinion, that if a saint found that he or she had not been married to the person that was made for them, they were not held by legal bonds from a right now to take their true mate, if they saw who it was. Hereupon an only child of a rich father, not living comfortably with her husband, ventured to reject him, and to lodge with another man. Some brethren of Attleborough hearing of it, went to labor with her father, and

others, to turn them from this delusion ; but he said he did not believe there was any harm in it, for they lay with the Bible between them. But to his sorrow and shame his daughter proved to be with child by her new companion, and her husband obtained a legal divorce from her. About the same time, a member of the first church in Canterbury declared that it was revealed to him, that a certain single woman would become his wife, though he then had a wife and children. For such conversation the church called him to an account ; and, after seven months' labor, they excommunicated him on September 27, 1749. In the winter following he purchased some mercury at Norwich, and it was judged that the woman he had a fancy for poisoned two children, they giving out that a new and strange distemper was come among them, and then he poisoned his wife, so that all the three died. This was not doubted to be the fact, though she was acquitted upon trial in Court, and he married her, and afterwards went into the war, and died in Canada. Some of her relations were called to an account, and were cast out of the church in Canterbury, for perjury, when acting as witnesses in Court upon that case.

Now though no actors in the first two of these scenes of iniquity were ever members of any of those Separate churches, and said church had so clearly acquitted themselves of the third, yet ministers, even from their pulpits, through the whole country, cast these scandals upon the Separate cause in general, to prove the dreadful danger and effects of separating from them ; and the populace were very ready to follow their guides, in this way of slander and railing. Such glaring injustice to their character, added to much violence upon their persons and estates, served greatly to confirm them in their way, and to guard their minds against receiving any instruction or correction from men who treated them so abusively. A first principle of their separation was, that the leadings of the divine Spirit are ever to be followed, and not fleshly wisdom, nor man's inventions ; but

how little was the meaning and right application of this principle understood? When it was asserted, that none but the regenerate ought to be admitted to full communion, ministers would answer, You cannot know who they are. And when it was mentioned, that our Lord says, Ye shall know them by their fruits; the question was shifted, whether they held to a satisfactory or an infallible knowledge? which dispute was often carried to extremes on both sides. And while many would confine the word *fruits* to dry morality, others ran to the opposite extreme, and formed their judgments of persons by their inward feelings towards them, rather than upon an intelligent view of what came from them by words and actions. The evils also which many had suffered from an overbearing majority, turned some to plead against receiving any members till every individual had fellowship with them, and the like in other church acts. At length they found that hereby the least member might tyrannize over the whole church. Again, though the undue power of councils had been much complained of, yet the Separates run into that evil in a new way. When councils were called, they were received into fellowship with the church that wanted advice; and when they had heard the case, and given their advice, in many instances the council acted with the church in censuring delinquents; though sometimes there were more of the council than of the acting members of the church.<sup>1</sup> After some years this practice was dropped. Other mistakes will appear in the course of this history.

<sup>1</sup> "Wednesday, May 8, [1751.] We met together, and there came brother S. Paine, T. Stevens, S. Wadsworth, Drown, Shepherd, Carpenter and some others; and, after prayer, brother John Paine said that our work he viewed to be this: that because they were so broken that they were not capable of acting as a church in dealing with some that had sinned, therefore we should embody together there as a church to hear and try those cases."

"Wednesday, January 15, [1752.] I went, being sent for, to Bridgewater Town, to a church meeting, and brother Carpenter was there; and we were taken into their fellowship to act with them upon the case of some that have transgressed in this church." Mr. Backus's Manuscript Diary.—ED.



Having good men against them in the cause of reformation was matter of peculiar trial. It was as much so with regard to Mr. Edwards, as any one man. His success was very great, and by acting upon Mr. Stoddard's doctrine, the church in Northampton had become very numerous; into which he essayed to bring gospel discipline, in 1744. But when some of their chief families perceived that it would expose their own conduct, they were inflamed against Mr. Edwards. And though it could not be honorable to reject such an eminent minister on that account; yet finding that he had turned from good old Mr. Stoddard's doctrine, that change was eagerly taken hold of, as a cover for their resentment. And all his prudent endeavors could never bring that church, as a body, to give him a fair hearing of his reasons for altering his sentiments upon that point; they were therefore published at Boston this year.<sup>1</sup> Some of his clearest proofs against admitting unsanctified persons to the ordinance of the Supper, are Rom. ii. 29, vi. 1—4. Phil. iii. 3. Col. ii. 11, 12. From whence he says, "that baptism, by which the primitive converts were admitted into the church, was used as an exhibition and token of their being visibly regenerated, dead to sin, and alive to God. . . . The saintship, godliness and holiness, of which, according to Scripture, professing Christians and visible saints do make a profession and have a visibility, is not any religion and virtue that is the result of common grace, or moral sincerity (as it is called) but saving grace."<sup>2</sup> Which point was the capital article that the Separate churches were built upon; but for fear it should be improved in their favor, he reminded the reader of what he had said against them, in his *Treatise on the Affections*, and in *Brainard's Life*; and then said, "I am still of the same mind concerning their lay-ordinations, their lay-preachings, and public exhortings, and administer-

<sup>1</sup>Qualifications for Full Communion. Edwards's Works, Vol. I.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>On a Right to Sacraments, pp, 20—23. [Qualifications, &c., Works, Vol. I. pp. 103, 105.]



ing sacraments ; their assuming, self-confident, contentious, uncharitable, separating spirit."<sup>1</sup> And yet he lived remote from almost all the numerous communities whom he thus censured, and knew but very little of the real state of their controversy. The excellent rules which he had published seven years before, were then out of his mind ; namely, to judge of a work by the real nature of it, and not by the circumstances and means of its introduction ; to make the Scriptures the whole rule to judge by ; and well to distinguish between the good and the bad among the subjects of the work.<sup>2</sup> A due regard to these rules of his own would have prevented the above reflections, as well as many things in the two other books named. A Separate minister, in the east part of Connecticut, wrote to Mr. Edwards upon this subject, and in particular desired him to answer two questions. 1. As he had described an excellent new house, how we could get into it without going out of the old one, which was in a ruined condition ? 2. What he meant by the word *Lay*, which he so often used ; whether the same as the Latin church did ? He returned an answer, wherein he allowed the old house to be in a ruinous condition ; but thought we were not yet called to leave it. And to explain what he meant by laymen, he had recourse to the old opinion about a successive power in ministers ; but he soon after felt such effects of that power, as he hardly could have believed before.

For his people were so uneasy, that he agreed to call a mutual council of ten churches, to settle the controversy betwixt them. But in the large county of Hampshire, which then included Berkshire also, he could find but three ministers of his judgment, upon the point in dispute ; and the church was strenuous against allowing him liberty to go out of that county for the other two whom he was to choose. At length they yielded so far ; but when the council met,

<sup>1</sup>Preface, p. 5. [Works, Vol. I, p. 87.]

<sup>2</sup>Thoughts on the work, 1742, pp. 1—40. [Works, Vol. III, pp. 267—310.]

one of the churches had refused to send to it; so that though their minister was received to act in the council, yet he had no delegate with him; therefore Mr. Edwards was *separated* from his dear flock, by the major vote of only one delegate in that council. And the only charge that they had against him they stated in these words, viz. :—"The pastor insisting upon it as necessary to the admission of members to full communion, that they should make a profession of *sanctifying grace*; whereas the brethren are of the opinion, that the Lord's Supper is a converting ordinance, and consequently that persons, if they have a competency of knowledge, and are of a blameless life, may be admitted to the Lord's table, although they make *no such profession*."<sup>1</sup> And Dr. Solomon Williams, who wrote against him, says, "Nothing should be expressed in the words of the profession, but what some unsanctified men may say and speak true."<sup>2</sup> And he was a chief actor in all that the ministers of Windham county had done against the Separates. And Mr. Edwards, who had been moved to censure them so hardly, yet was now *separated* from the people he dearly loved, upon the same point; and he removed and settled at Stockbridge, where he became more extensively serviceable to mankind; especially by his incomparable treatise upon the Freedom of the Will, and his answer to Taylor on Original Sin; both of which have been reprinted in London. At last he was chosen President of New Jersey College; but soon died there of the small-pox, March 22, 1758, aged fifty-six.

The fundamental principle above described, naturally leads to the exclusion of infant sprinkling; but the generality of those who came out in separation had no such idea. The Mansfield articles held up internal union as the rule of church communion, although persons were of different sentiments about baptism; but there were very few Baptists in

<sup>1</sup>Result of the council at Northampton, June 22, 1750, pp. 3, 4. [Works, Vol. I, p. 82.] Also, Edwards's Life.

<sup>2</sup>Answer to Edwards, p. 47.

any of their churches before 1749. In June, that year, Elder Moulton baptized thirteen members of the Separate church in Sturbridge, one of whom was Deacon Daniel Fisk; and in a little time after, all their officers, and the main body of the church, were baptized, even above threescore persons.<sup>1</sup> The exempting law for Baptists had again expired in 1747, when it was revived and continued for ten years. In order that the benefit of it might be extended to that society, two principal members of the second Baptist church in Boston wrote a certificate in their favor to Sturbridge assessors, January 23, 1750. In May following, two principal members of the Baptist church in Sturbridge gave in a list of their society according to law; yet they were all again taxed to Mr. Caleb Rice, a minister in that town. And, only for this and the following year, five men were imprisoned at Worcester, three oxen and eight cows were taken away, and a great deal of other property, for such taxes. Aaron Allen was the collector who did it for 1750, and Jonathan Mason for 1751. The first took a good cow from David Morse, a ruling elder in said Baptist church, for a tax of one pound, one shilling and four-pence; and the other took a pair of oxen from him, valued at eleven pounds, for a tax of less than five dollars. Such havoc did they make of their neighbors' goods, under religious pretences!<sup>2</sup> Sundry prosecutions

<sup>1</sup>The Separate church in Sturbridge was formed in 1748. The present Baptist church was formed from it in 1749. In Rev. S. Hall's Collection of Papers is an account of early ecclesiastical affairs in Sturbridge, written by Henry Fisk, an elder in the Baptist church, entitled, "The Testimony of a People inhabiting the Wilderness." Under date of May 16, 1749, he writes:—"About this time the trial concerning baptism came up. Now the voice is, '*Take heed how ye build*; for every man's work shall be tried, of what sort it is; for the day shall try it.' The day is come that shall burn as an oven. Now the daughter of Zion is called to arise and thresh. The Lord made her horn iron and her hoof brass. Infant sprinkling, which we called baptism, went away like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor."—ED.

<sup>2</sup>From Henry Fisk's "Testimony" we extract the following record of oppressions of Baptists in Sturbridge:—"They stripped the shelves of pewter, of such as had it; and of others that had not they took away skillets, kettles, pots and warming-pans. Others they deprived of the means they got their bread with, viz., workmen's tools, and spinning-wheels. They drove away geese and swine from the doors of



were commenced against those collectors ; and when one of the cases came to the Superior Court, both parties agreed to refer it to the judges ; and they gave judgment in favor of the Baptists. This gave a shock to their oppressors ; but a scheme was soon contrived to nonsuit the other actions commenced ; and that was by pleading, that the suit should have been against the assessors, and not the collectors. By this trick Mr. Morse was injured to the value of above twenty pounds ; and the whole society estimated their damages at more than a hundred pounds. And in a warrant for their town meeting of March 2, 1752, an article was inserted, to see if the town would indemnify their collector for his expenses, in the action which was turned against him. Moses Marcy, Esq., was Moderator, and as this article was objected to, it was proposed to raise the money by subscription, and they inquired how much it was. Upon which the Moderator drew out and read a paper, containing an account of "so much for going to a lawyer, and so many dollars given to Colonel Brattle at one time, and so many to another man, &c.," and he said the whole, with the execution, amounted to above twenty pounds. This moved the people so, that it did not seem likely that they would vote it by it-

some others ; from some that had cows ; from some that had but one they took that away. They took a yoke of oxen from one. Some they thrust into prison, where they had a long and tedious imprisonment. One brother was called from us and ordained a pastor of a Baptist church, and came for his family ; at which time they seized him and drew him away, and thrust him into prison, where he was kept in the cold winter till somebody paid the money and let him out. A. Bloice had a spinning-wheel taken away in 1750, and was imprisoned in 1751. D. Fisk had five pewter plates taken from him in 1750, and a cow in 1751. John Cory imprisoned, 1750. J. Barstow imprisoned, 1750. J. Pike, a cow taken, 1750. A cradle in 1750, and a steer in 1751, were taken from J. Perry. Trammel, andirons, shovel and tongs were taken from J. Blunt in 1750, and he was imprisoned the next year. John Streeter had goods taken in 1750 and 1751 ; Benjamin Robbins, household goods and carpenters' tools. Household goods and a cow were taken from H. Fisk in 1750 and 1751. Josiah Perry was imprisoned in 1750, and a cow taken from him in 1751. Nathaniel Smith was imprisoned in 1750. David Morse was imprisoned and a cow taken away in 1750, and a yoke of oxen in 1751. Goods were taken from Phinehas Collier in 1750 and 1751. John Newel, goods taken 1750 and 1751. John Draper imprisoned, 1751."—ED.



self; therefore, contrary to law, (which was insisted upon by the Baptists present) that article was blended with another, about school money, and the vote was carried, whereby the Baptists were again taxed to pay the expenses of an illegal law-suit against themselves.<sup>1</sup> And this was not enough; but said Moderator, who was a member of the Legislature, moved them so with these things, that when they met, November 22, 1752, they broke in upon their own law, and enacted, that the minister, with two principal members of the Baptist church, should sign their certificates for the future; and also that no minister or church should have any power to give lawful certificates, until they should have obtained "from three other churches, commonly called Anabaptists, in this or the neighboring provinces, a certificate from each respectively, that they esteem such church to be of their denomination, and that they conscientiously believe them to be Anabaptists." All such certificates were to be lodged with the town clerk where the Baptists lived, before their several assessments were made. This act was to continue in force five years. And said Moderator presented a petition to the Assembly in June following, that all the unimproved lands in Sturbridge might be taxed to his minister; but did not obtain it. It is to be observed, that those who lately became Baptists were not in fellowship with most of the old Baptist churches; therefore this act was passed to prevent their being exempted from taxes to State worship, It also required them to certify a conscientious belief of a point which they never did believe; viz., that they were Anabaptists, (*rebaptizers*,) a name of reproach cast upon them by their persecutors.

Among the many instances that discovered how tenacious our oppressors were of their taxing power to support worship, take the following. Esther White, of Raynham, had

<sup>1</sup>These facts about said meeting were sworn to by three men at Worcester, August 31, 1753, one of whom was Deacon Daniel Fisk, who died a member of our Legislature in 1778.

a small interest left her, for which she was taxed *eight-pence* to the parish minister, from whom she had withdrawn four years; and she seriously declared that it was against her conscience to pay it. Therefore, for no more than that sum, she was seized on February 28, 1752, and was imprisoned at Taunton until March, 1753, when said minister's own people were constrained to go and release her, without her paying any acknowledgment to that taxing power.<sup>1</sup> She soon after became a Baptist, and continued to give abiding evidence of true piety, until she died in peace in 1774. The case of Framingham, twenty-five miles westward of Boston, affords a further demonstration of the iniquity of supporting ministers by tax and compulsion. The Honorable Edward Goddard, Esq., formerly one of the Council in this Province, with other fathers of that town, could not concur with the majority in the settlement of a minister; and by the advice of other ministers they became an organized church by themselves in 1747, and wanted nothing but the sanction of the civil power, to make them as regular and orthodox a society in law as any others were. But as they were zealous friends to the late revival of religion, such an incorporation was denied them. And they had been all taxed to a minister they never chose, for six years before the publication upon the subject, which is quoted in Vol. I, Appendix B, pages 533, 537, 538. Three years after, their

<sup>1</sup>Wednesday, March 11, [1752.] Went to Taunton to visit sister Esther White and David White, that were put into prison from Raynham, on the 28th of February, for refusing to pay the minister's rate, and I found them something comfortable; especially sister Esther appeared to be in a sweet frame. She told me that the first night she was in there she lay upon the naked floor, and she said that she never imagined that the floor was so easy to lie upon before; she rested much more comfortably than she'd done many nights this winter on her bed: and she said that she was easy to stay there as long as God saw best she should." "Wednesday, May 20. Went to Taunton. Visited sister White in prison; found her composed and comfortable." "Thursday, June 19. Went to Taunton, and I had a season with sister White in prison, and the Lord granted divine refreshments both in conversation and prayer together." "Wednesday, October 14. I went with my wife to Taunton to visit the prisoners. Sister White is here in prison for the minister's rate, and she is wonderfully upheld by divine power in her sufferings. I preached a short sermon in the prison." Backus's Manuscript Diary.—ED.

minister left them, and a Baptist society is now formed among them.<sup>1</sup> And Connecticut still kept pace with the Massachusetts in oppression, of which the place of the author's nativity now exhibited a striking example. A widow who had withdrawn from their worship seven years, and steadily attended and supported worship in another church, gives so clear an account of it, that her letter is here presented to the reader, without adding or diminishing a word:—

Norwich, November 4, 1752.<sup>2</sup>

MY DEAR SON: I have heard something of the trials amongst you of late, and I was grieved, till I had strength to give up the case to God, and leave my burthen there. And now I would tell you something of our trials. Your brother Samuel lay in prison twenty days.<sup>3</sup> October 15, the collectors came to our house, and took me away to prison about nine o'clock, in a dark rainy night.<sup>4</sup> Brothers Hill<sup>5</sup> and Sabin were brought

<sup>1</sup>In Vol. III, of the old edition, written twelve years later than the above, Backus says, "A Baptist meeting has been upheld for many years in Framingham, where no church is yet formed." In the History of Framingham, under the head of "The Baptist Church," are the words, "The first recbrded notice of this society is contained in the town records, March, 1763; when an article was presented in the town warrant to see if the town will abate the ministerial rates to a number of persons of this town who pretend to be of the persuasion of Anabaptists, and have sent in their names to the Select-men. . . . In 1811, the society took the name of the Baptist Church of Weston and Framingham." At what date the church was actually constituted, we are not informed. In 1826, it was dissolved, and from it, in a new location, the present Baptist church in Framingham was formed.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>By act of parliament eleven days were taken out between the 2d and 14th of September this year; but as it was not done in our almanac, this date was in Old Style.

<sup>3</sup>"July 9, [1752.] I received a letter from my brother Samuel at Norwich, that informed me that he was in prison for rates, but yet appeared comfortable in soul." Backus's Manuscript Diary.—ED.

<sup>4</sup>"She was sick, and, thickly wrapped in clothes to produce perspiration, sat near the fire by her stand, reading the family Bible. The officer thought that, under the circumstances, she would yield and pay the rates. But Mrs. Backus was not the woman to abandon her religious principles." Denison's Historical Notes, p. 28.—ED.

<sup>5</sup>The following letter, published first in Denison's Historical Notes, p. 29, and afterwards in the Life and Times of Backus, p. 53, is of too much interest to be omitted here.

"Norwich Goal, November the 1st day, 1752.

"MR. LORD; SIR: I take this opportunity to present you with these few lines, which I should have thought you would have prevented by visiting us. Pray, Sir, consider whether or no you do not neglect to minister to Christ, for, "Inasmuch as



there the next night. We lay in prison thirteen days, and then set at liberty, by what means I know not. Whilst I was there a great many people came to see me; and some said one thing and some another. O the innumerable snares and temptations that beset me, more than I ever thought on before! But, O the condescension of heaven! though I was bound when I was cast into this furnace, yet was I loosed, and found Jesus in the midst of the furnace with me. O then I could give up my name, estate, family, life and breath, freely to God. Now the prison looked like a palace to me. I could bless God for all the laughs and scoffs made at me. O the love that flowed out to all mankind! Then I could forgive as I would desire to be forgiven, and love my neighbor as myself. Deacon Griswold was put into prison the 8th of October, and yesterday old brother Grover, and [they] are in pursuit of others; all which calls for humiliation. This church hath appointed the 13th of November to be spent in prayer and fasting on that account. I do remember my love to you and your wife, and the dear children of God with you, begging your prayers for us in such a day of trial. We are all in tolerable health, expecting to see you. These from your loving mother,

ELIZABETH BACKUS.

Some time after, her brother, Mr. Isaac Tracy, was imprisoned for the same cause, while he was a member of their Legislature; and they furiously went on, in imprisoning of persons<sup>1</sup> and spoiling of goods, to support State worship,

ye did it not to them, &c. And further, if you come not to see us, there are other prisoners here, and, as you sustain the character of a minister, see to it you neglect them not; and I should be glad of opportunity to see you. Ye lay heavy burdens, and refuse to touch them with one of your fingers. You say it is the authority. Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. Genesis xlix. 5—7: Pray, Sir, read the third chapter of Micah's prophecy, and may the Lord make the application. Consider also that our Lord Jesus hath told us that his kingdom is not of this world; also that he that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword. I could wish you a deliverance from mystical Babylon and from her merchandize. My soul looks to and longs to see her receive the cup of the Lord's vengeance and that all his plagues may come upon her in one day, and that God's children may come out of her, and that the kingdom may be given to the saints of the Most High. These lines, with our cause, I leave with God, who will, I trust, defend it; and so subscribe myself a prisoner of hope.

CHARLES HILL."

<sup>1</sup> "Wednesday, January 17. Here I would a little review what I have seen at Norwich. Last year, the enemies have done more at haling the saints to prison, than they have done ever before since our separation. But it is remarkably evident that, as it was with Israel, so it has been here; the more they oppressed them, the more they grew. This congregation, I think, is near as large again as it was the last time that I was here before. The Lord has indeed wrought wonders among them." Backus's Manuscript Accounts of Journeys.—ED.

for eight years, till the spiritual weapons of truth and love vanquished those carnal weapons ; and they have not been so used in Norwich for these many years past. As great a victory was also gained in Canterbury. The fall after Mr. Elisha Paine was settled on Long Island, he came over to Canterbury for some necessities for his family, when Samuel Adams, a collector, seized and imprisoned him at Windham, on November 21, 1752 ; where he wrote thus :—

I cannot but marvel to see how soon the children will forget the sword that drove their fathers into this land, and take hold of it as a jewel, and kill their grandchildren therewith. O that men could see how far this is from Christ's rule ; that all things that we would have others do unto us, that we should do even so unto them ! I believe the same people that put this authority into the hands of Mr. Cogswell, their minister, to put me into prison for not paying him for preaching, would think it very hard for the church I belong to, and am pastor of, if they should get the upper hand, and tax and imprison him, for not paying what he should be so unjustly taxed at ; and yet I can see no other difference, only because the power is in his hands ; for I suppose he has heard me as often as I ever have him. Yet he hath taken by force from me two cows and one steer, and now my body held in prison, only because the power is in his hands.

And on December 11, he wrote to Canterbury assessors, and said :—

To you, gentlemen, practitioners of the law, from your prisoner in Windham gaol, because his conscience will not let him pay a minister that is set up by the law of Connecticut, contrary to his conscience and consent. The Roman Emperor was called Pontifex Maximus, because he presided over civil and ecclesiastical affairs ; which is the first beast who persecuted the Christians that separated from their established religion, which they called the holy religion of their forefathers ; and by their law fined, whipped, imprisoned, and killed, such as refused obedience thereto. We all own that the pope or papal throne is the second beast, because he is head of the ecclesiastical, and meddles with civil affairs ; and for which he is also styled Pontifex Maximus, or High Priest. He also compels all under him to submit to his worship, decrees and laws, by whips, fines, prisons, fire and faggots. Now what your prisoner requests of you, is a clear distinction between the ecclesiastical constitution of Connecticut, by which I am now held here in prison, and the aforesaid two thrones or beasts, in the foundation, constitution and support thereof. For if by Scripture and reason you can shew they do not all stand on the throne mentioned in Psalm

xciv. 20, but that the latter is founded on the Rock Christ Jesus, I will confess my fault, and soon clear myself of the prison. But if this constitution hath its rise from that throne, then come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty; for better is it to die for Christ, than to live against him. From an old friend to this civil constitution, and long your prisoner,

ELISHA PAINE.

Five days after, he was released; but the extremity of the winter hindered him a great while from getting over to his family, who suffered much in an unfinished house, for want of his help. Mr. Solomon Paine published this year a view of the difference between the church of Christ, and the churches established by law in Connecticut. And though the contest was hot for eight years longer, yet it then abated, and in 1771 Mr. Cogswell was dismissed; and such taxes were entirely dropped in the place, and a number of actors therein were brought to confess their faults for the same. In the mean time, another unsuccessful address to their Assembly, signed by a large number of men, was presented in 1753. After which, twenty churches joined in a memorial to the King in Council, supported by authentic records and testimonies, to which Governor Fitch affixed the seal of the Colony; and Mr. Bliss Willoughby, and Mr. Moses Morse, carried it to London in 1756. But, having laid it before the deputation and committee for the Dissenters, whereof Dr. Avery was Chairman, they judged that if those plain violations of charter rights were presented to the King in Council it would endanger the taking away of Connecticut charter; which the petitioners were by no means willing for. Therefore said agents returned in 1757; and said committee wrote to Connecticut rulers against those oppressions. And by their advice a process in executive courts was commenced, with a design of carrying it to England by way of appeal; but having proceeded some ways therein, they dropped it.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

A CHANGE AMONG THE BAPTIST CHURCHES.—ESPECIALLY IN NARRAGANSETT.—THEIR MISTAKES DID NOT HINDER THE PREVAILING OF THEIR SENTIMENTS.—THE AUTHOR'S CASE.—HIS SETTLEMENT IN THE MINISTRY.—HOW HE BECAME A BAPTIST.—TWO GENERAL MEETINGS ABOUT IT.—THE TRUE STATE OF THE CONTROVERSY.—A NEW BAPTIST CHURCH FORMED.

Timothy Packom was an aged and pious member of the second church in Newport, before a division took place therein, in the following manner:—Daniel Greene, a gifted member of it, experienced a sudden turn in his mind, from general to particular redemption; and in the fall of 1739, James Brown joined with him, and brought a charge, in general terms, into their church against Elder Eyres, of his wanting the gospel qualifications of an elder; and then named some instances of apparent anger and severity against members who did not concur with his measures, to prove it. This caused much unhappiness. At length, on January 10, 1740, he read to the church a general confession of his imperfections in those respects; and they voted the same to be satisfactory. Said brethren inquired whether he meant to confess the particulars they had mentioned, but could obtain no answer from him, nor a copy of his confession. This appeared so grievous that they went and complained of it to their brethren of North Kingstown, who sent to inquire into the matter. For these things Greene and Brown were censured; and Packom and others joined with them, and car-

ried their complaints to one general meeting of their churches at Swanzev, and to another at Providence ; and not obtaining satisfaction, they formed a new church, and got some of their elders to ordain Mr. Packom as pastor of it. And in 1742 they published a vindication of themselves in these proceedings. But private letters afterwards from each of those men, to Elder Eyres and his church, express deep sorrow for those hasty proceedings, and their want of a fruitful understanding, humility and candor, with their zeal therein ; for which they earnestly desired forgiveness. But not seeing their way clear to return into full fellowship with that church, a removal of their censure was denied them. Greene, in a letter July 2, 1745, gives the following as the chief reason why he could not commune with said elder, viz. :—

So far as I can gather, thou believest, that man's salvation, conditionally bestowable, is the free purchase of Jesus Christ, and so the free gift of God ; but then that the security of the bestowment, or obtaining this salvation, doth turn and depend upon a condition, which is so left to man to perform, that it may or may not be performed, not as God himself shall be pleased absolutely, to cause, but as man, supposed to be a self-inclining agent, shall of himself be disposed, in the improvement or misimprovement of divine assistance. Whereas I believe, I think with all my heart, that man is in no respect an independent agent ; and that if he obtains salvation, it is not owing to himself at all ; but that his salvation, and its whole security to him, depend altogether upon the free pleasure and causation of Almighty God, who worketh all things according to the council of his own will, working in his children both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Such ideas, but not so clear, were impressed upon David Sprague's mind, before he began to preach, in the Baptist church in Scituate ; where he was told, that if he went on in that way he would become as bad an *electioner* as any of the Presbyterians. This, as he informed me, turned him in a great measure into their general way of preaching ; and he was settled in that way, at North Kingstown, about the time of the abovesaid division at Newport.

By the labors of Separate ministers many were converted,



and a Baptist church was formed in Coventry, and a pastor was ordained in it, October 11, 1749. Elder Sprague went there, and was prevailed with to assist, with other Baptists, in that ordination. And he there got such an acquaintance with some Separate elders, as to invite them to come and preach in the Narragansett country. This was done with very extensive effects; and Sprague was drawn so far as to act with Solomon Paine in Elder Babcock's ordination the next spring; which was then the first instance of the union of the two denominations in such acts. The majority of the church at North Kingstown grew so uneasy, that above seventy of them, male and female, signed a paper May 20, 1750, which divided the church. They therein represent, that their church was of about forty years' standing, and that good order had generally been kept up in it, until within the last seven years.

Since that, [say they,] our elder and some of the brethren have imbibed doctrines which neither we nor our general community ever did choose should be brought into the church. The doctrines crowded upon us were: 1. That Adam, by his eating the forbidden fruit, did bring mankind under condemnation in respect to the life which is to come at the day of judgment. 2. That every person who is truly converted, cannot, in the course of his life, sin himself out of God's blessings at the day of judgment. 3. That it was a duty for Christians to sing, with loud and joined voices, with rhyme and tunes of man's composure, in public assemblies.

These doctrines and their effects were then shut out of their meeting-house; though they proposed to leave it to others to settle the matter with their dissenting brethren about their interest therein. Upon which Elder Sprague, and those who were of his sentiments, constituted a church in Exeter, and several other churches were soon after formed in those parts, in fellowship with them.

Some among them, who had been baptized in the time of their former darkness, were now baptized again; which moved Elder Eyres to write to Elder Sprague about it, De-

cember 1, 1750.<sup>1</sup> and a stop was put thereto. Also a sight of former divisions, upon circumstantial, carried a few so far into the opposite extreme, as to admit some to table communion without any water baptism at all. There were at least two instances of this, the one at Exeter, the other at Warwick; but that practice was soon over. And these and other mistakes could not hinder an extensive spread of believers' baptism among the Separate churches; whose elders, Mack of Lyme, Stearns of Tolland,<sup>2</sup> Hastings of Suffield, Meacham of Enfield, Marshal of Somers, and others, were baptized. But fierce opposition being raised against what was called rebaptizing, which was represented to be a most wicked and pernicious thing, several teachers and others retracted their acting therein. And as the author's refusing to follow their example brought him to be a public object of resentment, and succeeding events have made him more extensively so, a clear idea of this part of our history cannot be given, without a more distinct account of his personal conduct, and the motives thereof, than otherwise would have been expedient and becoming. This he thinks is confirmed by ancient examples. Acts xi. 2—18; xxii. 3—21.

His being born of religious parents, and having a religious (though not what is called a liberal) education, he has ever esteemed an unspeakable favor. Yet he neglected the great salvation for more than seventeen years, because he secretly imagined that it would abridge his present liberty and comfort; and also, that when he got ready to set about

<sup>1</sup>A copy of this letter is preserved in the collection of Rev. S. Hall. It is a full, clear and spirited discussion of the point in question. We would gladly insert it, but its length forbids.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>Elder Shubael Stearns (having baptized Noah Alden, in July, 1754, and left him to preach to the part of his society who remained there) set off with others for North Carolina; and he, Jonathan Polk, Daniel Marshal, and others, were instrumental of a great work in those parts. I am well informed that from thence have sprung a large number of Baptist churches; which, by a blessing upon the succeeding labors of many, now extend through various parts of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and into Georgia.

the work in good earnest, God would be moved to help, pardon and save him. But in May, 1741, his eyes were opened to see, that time was not at his command, and that eternity was directly before him, into which he might justly be called the next moment. Then he knew what it was to work for his life for three months ; until on August 24, as he was alone in the field, it was demonstrated to his mind and conscience, that he had done his utmost to make himself better, without obtaining any such thing ; but that he was a guilty sinner in the hands of a holy God, who had a right to do with him as seemed good in God's sight ; which he then yielded to, and all his objections against it were silenced. And soon upon this a way of relief was opened to his soul, which he never had any true idea of before, wherein truth and justice shine with lustre, in the bestowment of free mercy and salvation upon objects who have nothing in themselves but badness. And while this divine glory engaged all his attention, his burthen of guilt and evil dispositions was gone, and such ideas and inclinations were implanted in his heart as were never there before, but which have never been rooted out since, though often overclouded. Hereupon he was led to make a profession of religion, in the church where he had always attended worship, and to walk therein for about two years. But then their minister obtained a vote in the church, to empower him to admit communicants by a major vote, without giving the church so much as a written relation of any inward change. It also appeared that the minister inclined to think that the ordinance of the Supper was a converting ordinance ; and he discovered a strong affection for the Saybrook scheme, which the church had rejected just before they settled him. The author therefore withdrew from that church, about the time that Canterbury church was robbed of their rights, in the manner before described. He had no expectation of entering into the work of the ministry, until September, 1746 ; and the grounds he acted upon then are described in his discourse, published



eight years after, entitled, *The Nature and Necessity of an Internal Call to preach the Gospel*. The manner of his settling among the people he still ministers to, here follows.

In a place called Titicut, upon the river between Bridgewater and Middleborough, a powerful work was wrought, in and after the year 1741, chiefly by means of the preaching of Mr. Eliab Byram; which moved the people to petition for a new precinct, in order to settle him as their minister; but the matter was delayed until he was gone and settled in New Jersey. And after Titicut precinct was constituted, in February, 1743, ministers refused to dismiss the communicants therein, so as to form a new church, lest they should call a minister whom they did not approve of. They were thus denied the rights which both the laws of God and man allowed them, until the brethren determined not to be restrained by such tyranny any longer; but came out and began to worship by themselves on December 13, 1747. The author was then unknown to them, and they to him; but by the disposal of Providence he was brought among them the next Saturday, in company with Mr. Snow, of Providence, who staid and labored ten days with remarkable effects; and the author was prevailed with to tarry and preach among them. And the precinct committee, perceiving that open opposition would then be in vain, came and requested him to preach to them, and to take regular steps for settlement. He informed them, that he was willing to act regularly according to the gospel, but could not submit to the power that ministers and parishes had assumed over the churches, which was contrary thereto. Yet they requested him, and he consented, to preach to them for a while. Such a revival took place as produced the hopeful conversion of about twenty souls, and the quickening of many others. A church was formed February 16, 1748, which increased to threescore members in ten months. But the opposite party met in March, and voted a large sum of

money to finish their meeting-house, and to hire other sort of preaching, and assessed it upon all the inhabitants. Therefore our society, on November 21, drew an address to them, to remind them of past transactions, and to invite them into a reconciliation ; or, if not, yet to entreat them not to violate the golden rule in their dealings towards us. They returned an answer which says, "What we demand of you is equal and right ; what you demand of us is evil and sinful ; and hence we have the golden rule upon our side, while you are receding and departing from it." And they went so far as to call it "gross ignorance and enthusiasm for any to deny that Christian rulers have a right to compel their subjects to receive and support orthodox ministers. And February 6, 1749, the author was seized as a prisoner, for thirteen shillings and fourpence assessed upon him in said tax. But as he refused to pay it, they after about three hours confinement settled it among themselves.<sup>1</sup> This was the best reward they ever offered him for preaching two months at their request. One of his brethren was imprisoned at Plymouth for said tax.<sup>2</sup> But when distress was made upon another of his hearers, they were prosecuted therefor, and it was found upon trial that said money was voted at an illegal meeting. They therefore appealed to the Superior Court ; and in the mean time, on December 14, 1749, procured an act of the Legislature which says, "That the proceedings of the meeting mentioned in the petition be, and they hereby are, held and deemed good and

<sup>1</sup> "February 6. This morning I was seized by the officer, and he threatened to carry me to prison for the precinct rate, but, glory to God! he gave me a sweet calmness and serenity of soul, not to fear him nor to treat him with any bitterness. I told him that they were going on in an unscriptural way to support the gospel, and therefore I could not do anything to countenance them in such a way. He told me that if I would not pay him he would immediately carry me to jail ; but just as he was going to drag me away, there came in a man [Captain Abiezer Edson] and called him out and paid him the money ; so that he was forced to let me go." Backus's Manuscript Diary.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> April 4, [1749.] Yesterday I went to Plymouth to see Brother W. Hooper that is put in prison there for the precinct rate. I found him very comfortable. Ibid.—ED.

valid law, the defect of the notification for calling said meeting notwithstanding." And by virtue of this act the case was turned against the appellee in the next trial; which shews that a worship supported by tax, is partiality established by law. In June preceding, a memorial against it was carried to the Assembly at Boston, by Mr. John Paine, and Mr. Samuel Peck, signed by a large number of men; but it was rejected,<sup>1</sup> as a like memorial also was in 1754.

As to baptism, disputes about it were first brought into the church in Titicut in August, 1749; and a disagreeable temper was soon discovered, and much heat in debates, for three weeks. And as the author was essaying, in his secret approaches to the throne of grace, to give up this case to God, a sudden conclusion came in, that the Baptist way is certainly right, because nature fights so against it. And he was hurried on to preach it up the next day; which caused confusion among the hearers, and returned with a horrible gloom over his own mind; and he was turned back to his former practice. Hereupon a number of the church drew off, and ten persons were baptized in September by Elder Moulton.<sup>2</sup> About three months after, when the heat of con-

<sup>1</sup> "May 24, 1749. Many of the saints met together in Attleborough, to seek the Lord's direction and to confer about petitioning the Court to set us free from the oppression of being forced to pay to the support of a worship that we can't in conscience join with; and we had considerable clearness in sending, and drew a petition and sent copies around to the saints in various parts of the governments; and it fell to my lot to carry a copy down to the Cape. Accordingly, on May 19, I set out, and got that day to Barnstable. The next day I visited three Harwich brethren in Barnstable prison for rates." Backus's Manuscripts. A hundred and eighty-three persons signed this petition, and contributed twenty-seven pounds for the cost of its presentation. The House voted to refer it to a joint committee, but the Council refused.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "September 23. I came home; and I found that Ebenezer Moulton, of Brimfield, had been here among my people preaching, and had *plunged* some of them last Lord's day. . . . Next day he *dipped* William Hooper, &c." Backus's Manuscripts. All but one of those baptized by Elder Moulton, were members of Mr. Backus's church. Difficulties on the subject of baptism soon produced an open rupture. Mr. Backus writes:—"February 3, 1749-50. This day Elder Moulton came here again, and Lord's day, February 4, he preached at Abiezer Edson's, and most of our people went to hear him. And in the evening the Baptist brethren met at Brother Wood's, and there embodied into a church and signed a copy of Brother Moulton's Articles of Faith and Covenant." This church soon dissolved. May 27,



troversy was abated, the question was put to his conscience, in his retired hours, Where is it, and in what relation to the church do those stand, who are baptized, but not converted? He could see that all the circumcised were obliged to keep the passover; and, had seen that there was no half-way in the Christian church, nor any warrant to admit any to communion therein without a credible profession of saving faith. No tongue can tell the distress he now felt. The neglect of gospel discipline a little before, lay heavy upon his mind; and the disputes and divisions in the church greatly added to his burthen. And near the close of 1749, a number of people in Easton and Norton made so high a profession of being led into believers' baptism, that no ordained minister in the land would do to administer it to them. But they met by a place of water, and one would baptize another, and then he the next; so that about twenty persons were dipped, by four or five administrators among themselves. Parting from their lawful wives and husbands, and taking of others, immediately followed; until some bastard children were born among them, with many other abominations. Could the author therefore have discovered any foundation for his former practice, he would most certainly have continued therein. But all his efforts failing, he was at last brought to the old standard; so as to leave good men and bad men out of the question, and inquire, *What saith the Scripture?* Hereby a settlement was granted, and he was baptized August 22, 1751.<sup>1</sup>

three of its members, and July 21, three more joined the First Baptist church in Swanzy.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> Thursday, August 22. Brother Benjamin Pierce, pastor of a church in a part of Warwick, preached among us at Brother Hinds's, this day, with considerable power, and then, in the evening, concluded to baptize some persons. .... When I came to see him baptize sundry persons, I having been convinced before that the way that I used to go on in, in baptizing infants, and by sprinkling, was not according to Scripture, and having this opportunity to practice, as I now believed was right, I dared not put it off. Therefore I told some account of my conversion, and then, of my experiences as to these things, which gave satisfaction; then I went down into the water with him and was baptized. And then, and afterwards in the evening, I felt a sweet calmness of mind, and some things opened with special clearness to my soul. Blessed be God." Backus's Manuscript Diary.—Ed.

The difficulties were become so great in the church, that a mutual council of five churches was called, October 2; which, after long labor, brought sixteen members to renew their covenant to go on together, and the council declared fellowship with them, and censured all the rest, and solemnly charged those sixteen to follow all the other members with labor, until they were recovered to fellowship, or cut off by discipline. Three of the sixteen were Baptists, and no hint was given of breaking communion between the two denominations. The author had no objection then against their advice, but was held back about a month by inward discouragements. But getting relief therefrom, he came forward, and was freely received in his office by all but two of those brethren; and they refused to receive him, unless he would baptize infants. A close labor was hereby brought on, and it was most fully declared, that we meant to give free liberty to every one to act according to his conscience in that respect; but to require a man to administer an ordinance in the name of God which he saw no command for, was requiring him to wrong his own conscience, to satisfy others. Yet those two brethren, who had lately renewed their covenant, refused to walk with their elder, or with those who received him, unless he would sprinkle infants. For this schism in the body they were censured; and, after ten months' labors, were excommunicated. In the midst of which time five Baptists were censured for refusing to commune with this body. Those two were no sooner cast out than they sent for three of the churches who were of the former council, who met here November 1, 1752, and fully justified them, and censured all who had acted against them, and declared that unless they manifested repentance therefor, they must mark and avoid them. Strangers cannot conceive how unaccountable it appeared, for eminent fathers thus to treat their children this year, for acting according to their own solemn charge the year before. It alarmed the Baptists in general, and our elders, Sprague, Babcock, and

Worden, being sent for, met here in council January 31, 1753; and, in conjunction with many of both denominations that came, they appointed a general meeting of these churches, and sent out citations therefor. In answer to which, twenty-seven churches met at Exeter, May 23, and unanimously agreed, that a turning to or from infant baptism was not a censurable evil; but that each should leave the other with God, according to Phil. iii. 15. And by their advice a council met at Middleborough July 11; under whose influence those censures, both of the two and of the five members, were revoked, and fellowship was again declared with this church. But the elders at Canterbury and Plainfield refused to come to the Exeter meeting, or to concur with these subsequent acts. For this, Elder Babcock refused to act with Elder Paine in an ordination at Stonington, May 29, 1753, though he did not then give his reasons therefor. And because he afterwards gave them to that church, and they sent to Canterbury to inquire into the matter, a process was commenced against Babcock as a transgressor, for laying in complaints against his brethren to another church than their own. This charge was carried to his church, but not succeeding there, Paine joined with Babcock, in calling a general meeting at Stonington May 29, 1754, to search into these matters, that the churches might come into a gospel settlement. Elders and brethren from forty churches then met, viz., from twenty-four in Connecticut, eight in the Massachusetts, seven in Rhode Island, and one on Long Island. After long and tedious debates, the question was put to every member of the conference, whether any just cause of offence was given to the Baptists in the result at Middleborough, of November 1, 1752? Thirty-seven said Nay; thirty-five said Yea, and seven chose to be silent about it. And after hard attempts to cast the blame of the breach upon the Baptists, and manifesting a willingness to commune with Christians who wanted light for infant baptism, Mr. Paine and sundry others declared



non-communion with such as professed to have light against it. I now find, that on the back of the paper which called his brother over from Long Island to this meeting at Stonington, Elisha has stated the question in these words, viz.:—

A holds out his principles. 1. He declares he will administer baptism to none but adult believers. 2. That he will go to any church, and baptize all persons that were baptized in infancy, if they will declare they were dissatisfied with their infant baptism. B holds out his principles, and declares that he will administer baptism to all adult believers and their infant seed, and that he doth it in the name of the Trinity, in obedience of a divine precept. Now the question is, Be these two persons agreed in their principles? or will there be any essential difference between their practice, if they practice according to their professed principles? Is it a matter of indifference for a pastor of a church to say, he baptizes an infant in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the fulfillment of a divine precept? My dear brother, if you can reconcile the above principles, in the essential parts thereof, you will remove all the grounds of bars and disputes; but if there be an essential difference in the above articles, and consequently in the practice on them, then there is an Achan in the camp; and no marvel that Israel hath, in all reformation, been troubled therewith. Either B sins in making infants the subjects of baptism, or A in cutting them off. Now it is clear to me, that infants were once the subjects to be sealed with the seal of Abraham's faith; therefore, if I allow a person to have Abraham's faith, I must shew that God hath forbid the seal to be put to their seed, or else forbid it in my own name; for there is but one covenant of grace, and that had Abraham's seed in it. Now if we allow a person to have Abraham's faith, why not his privilege? I pray God to pinch up our minds, until the troubler be found; for it is not a division between Pædo and Antipædobaptists, but promiscuously runs through the body of Christians, and will rend all cords of union between the dear lambs of God but what are made by human and party bands. Oh! my dear brethren! if God hath cut off infants, by forbidding water to be put on them, let us never tolerate the practice of putting it on; but if not, let none dare to forbid it, but do it in proper office and time.

Thus spake that eminent father of these churches; though the author then knew nothing of it, and never saw him nor his brother after that meeting.<sup>1</sup> A strong persuasion was still held by many, that if a right temper was in

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Solomon Paine died, after a short illness, October 25, 1754. Mr. Stevens died November 13, 1755. They were principal leaders among those churches.

exercise, Christians might, and ought to, commune together, although of different judgments about baptism. The author and his church labored earnestly to go on in that way ; but when some pious members manifested a belief of duty to be buried in baptism, others refused to go to the water to see it done, because, in their view, they were already baptized, and to repeat it would be taking the sacred name in vain. And when an elder came and sprinkled some infants, the Baptists felt a like difficulty, though they did not leave the meeting where it was done. Being unwilling to part, attempts were made to convince each other, which led into warm debates ; to avoid which, at the next meeting, each one was afraid to mention the subject, lest it should cause disputes. Thus edification, the great end of Christian society, was marred instead of being promoted, by that which is called large communion.<sup>1</sup> It was so far from answering to that name, that, with their utmost endeavors, the author and his brethren could never arrive at communion in the ordinance of the Supper, from September, 1754, to the end of 1755. To be unsettled in religious matters was very disagreeable to the author ; but he could not avoid a fresh search into the cause of these difficulties.

<sup>1</sup>The Baptist churches of this period gave full trial to the experiment of "mixed communion." Many circumstances were most favorable to its success. The Baptist and the Separate Congregational churches were bound together by the closest ties. The former left the latter from no ill feeling but with heartiest love, and this love continued, on both sides, after their separation. Their members had been converted together in the Great Awakening ; together they had come out from the Standing Order ; together they had suffered and were still suffering for the truth ; they had the same enemies and oppressors ; they felt the force of the same unjust and cruel laws ; their plundered goods were sold at the same auctions, and their bodies confined in the same prisons ; they had many kindred views and feelings, by which they sympathized most closely, and in which there were no others to sympathize with them. Moreover, they mutually desired inter-communion. Council after council and conference after conference recommended it, and there seemed to be no voice against it. And yet it failed. Practical difficulties arose, such as are described above. The truth could not be escaped that Baptist churches, by renouncing infant baptism and sprinkling, and then practically recognizing them again as a proper declaration of discipleship and initiation to membership in the visible church, placed themselves in a position of direct inconsistency. One by one, reluctantly, but at last universally, they abandoned the untenable ground.—ED.

The arguments of the beloved Bunyan, for a free communion with all saints, had before appeared conclusive to him and others ; but a review of them discovered his mistakes. One argument is, that plain laws, of old, were sometimes dispensed with ; as circumcision was omitted in the wilderness ; David, ate of the shew-bread that was not lawful for him, and the people in Hezekiah's time ate of the passover, otherwise than it was written. But it was found upon search, that all of these were extraordinary cases, which were not repeated ; and therefore could afford no plea for dispensing with rule at ordinary times. And as to Bunyan's capital argument, which is, *God hath received them, therefore we ought to* ; it was observed, that his example is often inimitable by us ; but as far as it is imitable, it is always in the truth. Hence truth is never to be violated for any one, no, not to save natural life, which all lawful means should be used to preserve. And truth so clearly requires baptism before the Supper, that Pædobaptists do never come to the table with any but such as are baptized in their esteem. Neither could we understandingly act in being buried in baptism, until we were convinced that what was done to us in infancy was not gospel baptism ; therefore to commune at the Lord's table with any who were only sprinkled in infancy, is parting with truth, by practically saying they are baptized when we do not believe they are. I since find that the learned and pious Dr. Watts allows this argument to be just,<sup>1</sup> though many still wrangle against it.

A number of brethren being convinced that though freedom towards all men ought to be shown, as far as it can be in the truth, yet that truth limits church communion to believers, baptized upon a profession of their own faith, constituted a church at Middleborough, in this way, on January 16, 1756 ;<sup>2</sup> and, by assistance from Boston and Reho-

<sup>1</sup>Rational Foundation of the Christian Church, pp. 189, 260.

<sup>2</sup>“July 3, [1755.] This was kept as a day of public fasting. .... I read a new draft of Articles that I've drawn up, in which is expressed my faith about the sub-



both, the author was installed their pastor the 23d of July following.<sup>1</sup> He had in the mean time published a discourse from Gal. iv. 31, to shew that Abraham's first son that was circumcised was the son of the bond-woman, an emblem of the national church of the Jews; in distinction from regen-

jects of baptism; and the brethren all concurred with the rest of the Articles, but upon that we had some discourse, and all present that are of the Baptist principle thought it duty to proceed anew to gather a church agreeable to our faith; and the other brethren said they would not stand in the way."

"January 2, 1756. We had a conference meeting at my house, and brother Hinds was with us. .... I now declared that I firmly believed that, as none are the proper subjects of baptism but real saints, so every such soul ought to be baptized by immersion before they come to the Lord's Supper. .... And I did solemnly entreat and invite my brethren to arise and build the old wastes; and the most who were present discovered a willingness so to do. So we appointed another meeting next week to labor on these affairs."

"January 16. Our people met according to appointment, and Brother Hinds came and preached a sermon from I Cor. 5. 7, 8; and he laid open in many things, clearly, how we ought to purge out the old leaven in order to be a new lump. And my soul had a very weighty sense of the greatness of the affairs before us and of the infinite importance of carefully keeping to the rules of Christ's house both in admitting members, and also in after dealings with them. And had not my soul believed that Christ would go before me, I should not have dared to step forward, but being satisfied of that (after some free discourse with our brethren who do not see with us,) I read the Articles and Covenant which I had drawn, and then proceeded, solemnly, in the presence of God and his people, to sign them; and the following brothers and sisters signed with me, viz., Timothy Briant and John Hayward, Mary Caswell, Esther Fobes and my dear consort. And there appeared a good degree of solemnity and sense of divine things in acting therein." Backus's Manuscript Diary.—Ed.

"June 23. I went early to pour out my soul to God, and was enabled to rest all my affairs with him, and especially the work of this day, (for none of the elders that were sent to were yet come,) and I found a measure of willingness to leave the case with the Lord to send whom he pleased. Not long after came Elder Bound and Deacon Collins from the Baptist church in Boston, and Elder Round and Esquire Bullock and Joshua Briggs, brethren from the second Baptist church in Rehoboth. And they proceeded to read the letters from us and their churches' answer thereto, and embodied into a council and chose Elder Round, Moderator, and Elder Bound, Clerk; and after inquiring into the principles and standing both of the church and myself, and of our coming together in this relation, they declared themselves satisfied therewith. Then we went out in public before a great congregation of people, and Mr. Bound preached from Dan. 12. 3. .... Then these two elders laid on hands, and Elder Round made the first prayer and gave the charge, and Elder Bound gave the Right Hand of Fellowship, and made the last prayer. And through the whole exercise, my soul felt a great solemnity. We concluded with singing the first part of the 132d Psalm. O that that Psalm may ever be fulfilled among us. Backus's Manuscript Diary.—Ed.

erate souls, the spiritual seed of Abraham, of whom the Christian church was constituted ; into which neither natural birth, nor the doings of others, can rightly bring any one soul, without its own consent.<sup>1</sup> Upon these principles was the first Baptist church in Plymouth county then founded ; it being the first of this persuasion, in an extent of country above a hundred miles long, from Bellingham to the end of Cape Cod, and near fifty miles wide, betwixt Boston and Rehoboth, wherein are now seventeen churches.

Men who regard carnal ease, or temporal honor and interest, more than truth, cannot be pleased with the foregoing account of things ; but their scorn or rage is contemptible, when compared with the divine favor or displeasure. Young Christians who highly regard God's favor and fear his frowns, yet are far from being aware of how nearly truth and error may be blended in honest minds ; and nothing can teach them the nature and effects thereof like experience. The Spirit of truth taught Peter that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God ; but Peter was greatly mistaken, in concluding from thence that he had inherent strength enough to die for his Saviour. On the day of Pentecost he and others received vastly greater light and strength ; yet how much were they still mistaken in supposing that all who were converted to Christianity must be circumcised ! And though a new vision from heaven taught Peter to go freely to the Gentiles, yet what dissimulation was he and Barnabas afterwards insnared in about those matters ! Gal. ii. 11—14. Great care is ever to be taken, not to condemn any thing but what is really evil, nor to expose what is so unnecessarily. If the author has done either in the preceding narrative, he desires to lie open to conviction. It is drawn from a large number of original papers and records, which any

<sup>1</sup> "January 20. This evening I finished writing a discourse concerning the bond-woman and the free, which is designed for the press, wherein I have shown the grounds upon which I have changed my principles concerning baptism. May heaven's blessing follow it for the good of the people of God !" Backus's Manuscript Diary.—ED.

who desire it are welcome to see. His experience in these affairs has very sensibly taught him, that mistaken conclusions are often drawn from good premises ; and also, that wrong judgments are the natural effects of erroneous principles. In particular that truth is not to be embraced only because nature fights against it, nor rejected because bad men have professed it, or good men have fought against it. Also that the holding of internal union as the rule of church communion, naturally leads to the censuring of brethren of both denominations, if they refuse to act according to that rule, which is making our affection to creatures the standard instead of the revealed will of God. Likewise to censure serious Christians, because of difference in opinion about worship, in the same manner as if they were guilty of a plain breach of moral precept, is doubtless erroneous. In a word, truth is to be received and held for its own sake, and not upon any exterior motives ; and it is never to be violated or forsaken for any consideration whatsoever.





## CHAPTER XIX.

DIVISIONS AMONG THE LEARNED.—ORTHODOXY ATTACKED UNDER THE NAME OF BIGOTRY AND TYRANNY.—WALLINGFORD ORDINATION.—REMARKS THEREON.—OTHER DIVISIONS IN CONNECTICUT.—THE LIKE IN THE MASSACHUSETTS.—MAYHEW AND CLEAVELAND'S CONTROVERSY.—ARMINIANISM EXPOSED.

Little do men know of themselves, until they are tried ; and as little do they know of the designs of the Most High, when he is trying them. When Mr. Davenport judged Mr. Noyes to be unconverted, an ample testimony was published in his favor, by President Clap, and others.<sup>1</sup> But the same man was judged to be heterodox, by the same President, eight or nine years after ; and then himself went to the same Separate meeting that he had censured others for going to. And at a meeting of the corporation of Yale College, November 21, 1753, it was resolved that no member of the corporation, nor officer of instruction therein, should hereafter be admitted, until he had given his explicit consent to their ancient forms of orthodoxy, and renounced all opposite principles ; and that, as this was a known condition of their admission, if any of them should afterwards embrace a contrary system, common honesty would oblige them to own it, and to resign their places. It was likewise resolved, that if any of their members or officers should be suspected of heterodoxy, he should be brought upon examination before said corporation.<sup>2</sup> In October, 1753, an act of their Legis-

<sup>1</sup>Chauncy's Thoughts, pp. 158—161.

<sup>2</sup>Clap's History of Yale College, pp. 63, 64.

lature was procured, to establish a professorship of divinity in the college; which terminated in setting up worship on the Lord's days, and the gathering of a church therein. A great noise, in print and otherwise, was made about these proceedings; which had so much influence about this time, as to cut off an annual grant of a hundred pounds from the government to the president, which has not been restored since. Much pains were taken, by him and others, to prove that none but orthodox ministers ought ever to be elected as members of the college corporation.

In the mean time, contentions about bishoprics, among Presbyterian ministers, turned many over to Episcopacy; and very tedious controversies were carried on, about the validity of Presbyterian ordination, and other points connected therewith. So much smoke and dust was raised hereby, as opened a pleasing prospect to a number, of expelling the ancient plan of orthodoxy, under the name of bigotry and tyranny; which, said they, "degrades men from their just rank, into the class of brutes. It damps their spirits; it suppresses arts; it extinguishes every spark of noble ardor and generosity in the breasts of those who are enslaved by it. . . . There are virtuous and candid men in all sects; all such are to be esteemed. There are also vicious men and bigots in all sects; all such ought to be despised."<sup>1</sup> And the writer of this, became, for sixteen years, the most popular author in New England. He got so far in five years, as to insinuate that the doctrine of three eternal persons in the Godhead came from the pope or a general council, and that it ought to be treated with contempt. And he asserted, "that the Scripture teaches no such doctrine as that of God's *imputing* the perfect righteousness of Christ to sinners for justification."<sup>2</sup> Four senior ministers of Boston joined upon this occasion in publishing a testimony for the essential and eternal deity of our Saviour, and in expressing

<sup>1</sup>Preface to Mayhew's *Mystery of Charles's Martyrdom*, 1750.

<sup>2</sup>Mayhew's *Sermons*, 1755, pp. 157, 417, 418.



their grief at what had lately been published against it ; but as they did not mention his name, he let it pass with contempt. But his party in Connecticut soon after could not help discovering themselves very plainly.

The Baptist meeting at Wallingford was removed twenty miles, to Southington, four years before Mr. Whittlesey died, in 1756. Yet in two years, among twenty candidates whom they tried, they could not agree in the settlement of a minister in that parish. Therefore on April 26, 1758, four ministers advised them to send to Cambridge for a candidate ; in compliance wherewith a man came, highly recommended, from thence. And in June they gave him a call to settle, with an offer of two hundred pounds settlement, and a salary of eighty pounds the first year, ninety the second, and a hundred a year ever after, as long as he continued their minister. This call he carried to Cambridge, where he was advised to accept it ; and he returned and published his acceptance thereof, and his ordination was appointed to be on October 11. And now we are to see more of what their Saybrook Platform is. Like civil courts, it does not hinder persons and societies from voluntary agreements among themselves, where there is no opposition ; but when contentions break out, it was designed as a known and fixed tribunal, within each circuit, so that no party might have "liberty to choose their own council where they pleased ;" as Dr. Cotton Mather declares, who well understood it.<sup>1</sup> Yet in this case, though much opposition arose against said candidate, before his ordination was appointed, his party sent for several ministers out of the Massachusetts, for one out of the county of Hartford, as well as for such as suited them in their own county, to be the ordaining council.<sup>2</sup> Before their call was given, a justice of the peace, who was a father in that church, went to talk with their candidate about his doctrine ; but was answered in a short and angry manner ; and the candidate said, "he was too young to be examined ; and if

<sup>1</sup>Ratio Disciplinæ, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup>Todd, p. 11.

there were any objections against what he had delivered in preaching, he would answer them before the ordaining council." To this testimony the justice has signed his name. Two others of the society also certify, that they waited upon him some time before his settlement and salary were voted, to obtain satisfaction about his principles; "and particularly desired him to let them know his sentiments with regard to original sin, and the saints' perseverance, the power of free will, and falling from grace;" but he refused to tell them.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the Consociation was convened at Wallingford, the day before the time appointed for his ordination, to hear and act upon a complaint exhibited against said candidate; but he and his party protested against their meeting at that time, and refused to be tried by them. And a minister from Hingham, in the Massachusetts, and six more of those who were sent for, formed themselves into a council, and went into their meeting-house, and heard the candidate for ordination vindicate himself before judges that his accusers refused to be tried by. Though while they were there, they received a paper, signed by ninety-five inhabitants of that parish, who were in possession of about half the freehold estate therein, desiring them not to proceed in the ordination. With this paper came a message from their Consociation, warning and beseeching them not then to proceed. Yet in the face of all this, those ministers went on and ordained the candidate, as the pastor of that parish. Such an instance was never before known in this land; therefore their Consociation adjourned, and called in the Southern Consociation of Hartford county to act with them in the affair. But all their united efforts could not bring said party to submit to a trial before them; therefore, at their meeting of April 3, 1759, the sentence of non-communion was passed against the minister so ordained in the first society in Wallingford, and against the members who should continue with him. And the ministers of that county who acted in that ordination

<sup>1</sup>Eells, pp. 9, 10.

were declared to be disorderly persons, unworthy to sit in any of their councils, until they gave satisfaction for that offence ; and these were Joseph Noyes, Isaac Stiles, and Chauncy Whittlesey, of New Haven, Samuel Whittlesey, of Milford, Theophilus Hall, of Meriden, and Jonathan Todd, of East Guilford.<sup>1</sup> The last of these, with Mr. William Hart, of Saybrook, (who collected many stories against the New Lights,<sup>2</sup>) wrote in favor of that ordination ; and Mr. Eells and Mr. Noah Hobart wrote against it. Two of these “*disorderly*” ministers were sons to the former minister of Wallingford ; the second of them was the tutor for whose sake David Brainard was expelled the college ; and his father was Moderator of the Consociation that deposed Mr. Timothy Allen from his pastoral office, at a meeting which was not called for that end.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Robbins was now one of their judges, in an affair which affords many useful lessons.

Here we may see how self can blind the children of men. The scene of these actions was in the same town, from whence all their actings against him originated. He only preached there occasionally ; they settled a minister in the parish. He acted against the request of two ministers, and forty-two inhabitants ; they against the Consociation of the county, and ninety-five inhabitants. In the first case the Saybrook Platform was fairly renounced, and the oracles of God received in its stead ; in the other, those ministers only protested against the meeting upon it, at that time ;<sup>4</sup> but intended to act upon it themselves afterwards, when a “smart young gentleman from Cambridge” should have effected an agreeable change among them.<sup>5</sup> Robbins’s plea for liberty of conscience was rejected, and his confessions also ; because, they say :—

The Council at Guilford did not sit to make a number of new laws, by virtue of some legislative power in themselves, but sat to inquire what were the laws of Christ. He omits to tell the world, that the Association inquired of him, whether, in his third confession, he acknowledged the

<sup>1</sup>Eells, pp. 32—48.<sup>2</sup>Chauncy’s Thoughts, pp. 183—195.<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 215.<sup>4</sup>Todd, p. 25.<sup>5</sup>Todd, p. 4. Eells, p. 10.



transgression of any law of God, in any respect, and that he declared to them he did not. Would any one expect that the Association would sit to hear one *flam* after another.<sup>1</sup>

But now what terrible invasions are made upon their rights and liberties! First it is said:—

The complainants were their own members, and have no right by the constitution to call a Consociation to sit in judgment upon them and exercise jurisdiction over them. They are a Congregational church, having power of church discipline within themselves; and the constitution secures them in the peaceable enjoyment of the Congregational privileges, and did not subject them to the prosecution of their own members.

And says their advocate:—

It always appeared to me a thing not only unprecedented and unconstitutional, but cruel,<sup>2</sup> to advise the Moderator to call the Consociation upon a complaint against the church, without letting the church know that any complaint was exhibited against them, or giving them opportunity to shew, if they were able, that there was no occasion therefor.

And he insinuates that the love of money had some influence in raising opposition against that ordination.<sup>3</sup> At the same time Mr. Hart (his second in this affair) has recourse to the laws of England, about the induction of ministers into profitable livings, to vindicate their ordination of said teacher at Wallingford; which word *Induction* has been made use of by Episcopalians, in the Colony of New York, to rob Presbyterians of their rights;<sup>4</sup> because it was said in the Consociation, “The constitution is in danger of being upset, but it is better that the Arminians do it than we;” they said, “It certainly must be a very wicked thing, to dub men heretics, brand them with ill names, and ascribe to them principles that they disclaim, only to compass some particular designs.<sup>5</sup> But one of their most knowing and candid ministers assures us, that he never heard any of them so spoken of since, who had not the same character before.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Their Answer to Robbins, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>2</sup>How cruel then were they, in all their proceedings, against the minister of Branford!

<sup>3</sup>Todd, pp. 9, 14, 26.

<sup>4</sup>Hobart, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup>Todd, p. 72.

<sup>6</sup>Hobart, p. 36.

And it is certain, that all their proceedings against Mr. Robins were upon the complaints of a small party, contrary to the minds of a large majority, both of his church and congregation. And those attempts were to root out a minister who was well settled ; these were to settle one who had preached in the place but a few weeks before he received his call, when the opposition openly appeared. From all this we learn, that what they call *free-will power*, is a power to conform to or dispense with rule, divine or human, as they judge best, and to plead liberty of conscience for so doing ; yea, a liberty to brand dissenters from their judgments with as many ill names as they please, but to deny that liberty to others concerning themselves. From hence we also learn, that their Consociation power over the churches, instead of preventing, causes divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine of Christ. It now caused a division in Wallingford, and those who adhered to the ancient faith of their churches were forced to draw off, and form another church, and settle another minister ; and the secular arm, from whence their Consociation power was derived and is supported, upholds said minister in that place, and has called him to preach an Election Sermon at Hartford. His name and present title are James Dana, D. D.

These remarks are greatly confirmed by succeeding events. Sandeman's letters on Theron and Aspasio came out in 1758, which give those teachers a most severe lashing who point their hearers to something good in themselves, for encouragement, instead of Christ's finished atonement. Mr. Ebenezer White, of Danbury, readily adopted these sentiments, and most of his hearers also ; but a minor part of them were so much displeased therewith, as to enter a complaint against him to the Eastern Association of Fairfield county. Upon hearing of which, he and a large majority of his church met June 28, 1763, and renounced the Saybrook Platform ; though they did not withdraw their fellowship from the churches that were under it. In August the Consociation

in that circuit met at Danbury, and, viewing the case to be difficult, they adjourned, and called in the Western Consociation of that county, to act with them. After much labor, at their meeting of March 27, 1764, they rejected Mr. White and the majority of his church, as men who had separated from their constitution; and owned the minority who adhered to it as the first church and society in Danbury, declaring that they were released from all obligations to Mr. White as their minister, and that the Consociation could not recommend him as such to any other people, until he gave them satisfaction. But this last clause was protested against as unreasonably severe, by five ministers of their number.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Izrahiah Wetmore was one of them, who in an Election Sermon at Hartford nine years after, gave an explicit testimony against any attempts to establish the church of Christ by human laws. Another of them was Mr. David Judson, of Newtown, who in 1770 renounced the Saybrook scheme, as his church also did in 1773; and several meetings of the Consociation were called upon it, and pamphlets were published against them by Mr. Judson, and for them by Mr. Robert Ross.<sup>2</sup>

If we again turn our eyes to Boston; the same temper presents itself to view. The Separate society that began there in 1742, growing small, dismissed their minister, and dissolved their society; and a parish upon Casco Bay called and settled him as their pastor. This displeased a few of the inhabitants so much, that they brought their complaints to Boston, in 1760; and were not only set off themselves to

<sup>1</sup>White's Narrative, pp. 22, 23.

<sup>2</sup>In 1762, Mr. Ross published a labored piece at New Haven, against the Baptists and others, who had separated from his party; wherein he advanced facts and arguments to prove them to be deluded enthusiasts. One of his plainest facts is, that a few foolish people at Wrentham, a hundred and sixty miles from him, once ventured to appoint a time to ordain a minister over them, who had not consented thereto; and they were confounded in it. His plainest argument, to prove that the Baptists and others are a deluded people, is in these words, viz.: "If you had not embraced some errors about experimental religion, why do you separate *from us*!" Ross's Address, pp. 45, 105.



another parish, but procured a general law of the province to prohibit the settling of any minister for the future, in their way, who had not an academical degree, or an approbation from the majority of the settled ministers of the county where the parish lies. At the same time their Grand Jury, in their several County Courts, were charged by the Judges from year to year to enter complaints upon oath against every parish that neglected to settle and support an orthodox minister. But about this time an Episcopal church was erected near the College in Cambridge, whose minister, at the opening of it, exclaimed most bitterly against the fathers of New England and their doctrines, and published some high commendations of the Episcopal way. This moved the popular author before named, at Boston, to appear against that party. And having quoted the 9th, 11th, 13th and 17th articles of the church of England, which speak of Original Sin, Justification by faith in Christ's imputed righteousness, Works done before justification, and of Predestination and Election, he says :—

To speak sincerely, I own it is my private opinion, that it has been too common a thing for people in New England to express themselves in a manner justly exceptionable upon these points, however agreeably both to the letter and spirit of the articles aforesaid ; but yet, I believe, not more exceptionably than many eminent divines of the church of England did in the last century.<sup>1</sup>

This last remark is undoubtedly just ; but can any say so of what follows ?

The eldest of the two brothers who were expelled out of Yale College<sup>2</sup> published an essay at Boston, to prove that two of this author's sermons were erroneous, about the person and atonement of Christ. Directly upon which it was declared in some of the Boston papers, "that it was as much out of character for a gentleman of the Doctor's reputation to enter into a controversy with Mr. Cleaveland, as it would

<sup>1</sup>Mayhew's Observations upon the Episcopal Society, 1763, pp. 91, 92.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 71.—ED.

for a general of an army to accept of a challenge from a subaltern." To which was soon added, "A Letter of Reproof to Mr. John Cleaveland, of Ipswich, by Jonathan Mayhew, D. D." Therein the author of the essay was considered "as a person unworthy to be reasoned with." Says Mr. Mayhew:—

It was my determination from the first, not to enter into a dispute with such a *wrong headed and worse hearted wretch!* . . . . Had I not a right to speak my sentiments upon these points? If you disliked them, could you not content yourself with preaching your own? Or, if you must needs publish them, would it not have been more *decent* and *expedient* for you to do it, without engaging in a personal controversy with me? Would not any end [which] you could propose to yourself have been answered as well, though you had never mentioned my name?<sup>1</sup>

Upon which it was observed, that the eternal Jehovah says to wrong headed and worse hearted sinners, "Come now and let us reason together;" which this great pretender to virtue and liberty was unwilling to do with a fellow-minister! but would have it esteemed an *indecent* as well as an *inexpedient* attempt, for such as did not stand in so high a class as himself to expose his inconsistencies and errors.<sup>2</sup> A sight of these things moved President Clap, and the corporation of Yale College, to send to Mr. Cleaveland a degree of Master of Arts, in 1764, as they afterwards did to his brother. Yet when Mayhew died June 9, 1766, Chauncy gave him a high character, in a funeral sermon, and reflected upon his answerer, calling him "An obscure person, without reputation;" but he could not at the same time conceal his own corruption.

For Robert Sandeman, whose writings had made a great stir in this country, came over from Scotland, and landed at Boston in October, 1764, and gathered a church in Boston, another in Providence, and a third in Danbury. Therefore, to guard against his influence, Chauncy published a volume

<sup>1</sup>Letter of Reproof, pp. 4, 20, 39.

<sup>2</sup>Cleaveland's Reply, 1765, pp. 3, 14.

of sermons in 1765, wherein he gives his ideas concerning fundamental points in the following words. Says he :—

The original promise of life was not suspended upon *perfect obedience* to what is commonly called *the natural or moral law of God*. In contradiction hereto, I know it is said, by *most* Christian writers, that the first man was so placed under this law, that he must work his way to life by perfectly doing all things commanded by it ; insomuch that he could not have obtained it but by a persevering obedience in every point of duty, without the least failure. But this is said entirely without book. The Scripture nowhere insinuates, that he was under *such a covenant of works*. It suggests, on the contrary, that God, in favor to him, did not put him upon so *severe* a trial for life. His trial, if we may believe the sacred record of it, was in a *single instance*, and this not of doing, but of forbearing to do. . . . That which was made the test of Adam's subjection to God, was a command not of the moral but positive kind ; a command, not deducible from reason, but known only by revelation. . . . It would be the exact truth, should I say, that the first parents of men, while innocent, in common with their posterity since the elapse, could have obtained life in no way but that of *grace through faith*.

And after a labored criticism upon Rom. v. 12, he says :—

The judicial sentence of God, occasioned by the offence of one man, is that which fastens *death*, with all its natural causes and appendages, upon the human kind ; and 'tis IN CONSEQUENCE of this sentence, UPON men's coming into existence under the disadvantages arising from it, that they *sin* themselves.<sup>1</sup>

This is his account, accented in this manner. From whence we may see, that his principles were contrary to most Christian writers about original righteousness, original sin, the nature of grace, and the justice of God in his government of the world. For the moral law is to love God with all our powers, and to love our neighbors as ourselves ; which can never be called severe, without implicitly denying his infinite excellency and righteousness. And though the precept concerning the forbidden fruit could only be known by pure revelation, yet by violating it man revolted from heaven, and seized upon the earth as his own ; and we are all born in that state of revolt, which is original sin.

<sup>1</sup>Chauncy's Twelve Sermons, pp. 18—20, 23.



And grace and works are as distinct as wages and gifts. Rom. vi. 23; xi. 6. Wages cannot be justly claimed but upon doing the work; while the most proper subjects of gifts are such as are sensibly guilty and helpless. Neither can the justice of God, in sending death upon infants, be clearly vindicated in any other way, than by viewing them as sinners in our first public head. And to deny God's right to constitute him as such, implicitly militates against his justifying souls by the imputed righteousness of the second Adam.

## CHAPTER XX.

DARK AND TRYING TIMES.—BUT LIGHT BREAKS FORTH IN VARIOUS PLACES.—A DOOR OPENED FOR THE REMOVAL OF ANCIENT PREJUDICES.—WRITINGS TO PREVENT IT.—AND CRUEL OPPRESSION.—TO WHICH VERY MEAN PRACTICES WERE ADDED.—GROSS INCONSISTENCIES DISCOVERED.

Divisions and perverse disputings, in all parts of the land, brought the churches into terrible circumstances; and each party was ready to cast the blame of it upon others. And a national war began in 1755, which ever tends to corrupt the morals, as well as to destroy the property and lives of men. Its influence was very extensive; and it issued in February, 1763, in the cession of the whole continent of America north of the Mississippi to the Crown of Great Britain; a vast territory indeed. Many rejoiced greatly upon this occasion, imagining that our wars, which for near a century had been frequent and very distressing, were now come to an end. But, alas! to the whole British empire, these were but the beginning of sorrows. Upon the conquest of Quebec, Governor Wentworth, of New Hampshire, appointed a public thanksgiving upon Saturday, November 10, 1759, because it was the birth day of an aged and good king; and he said in his proclamation, “The ministers of the gospel are hereby directed to perform divine service, in their respective congregations, in the morning only, the afternoon being devoted to public rejoicings, and awful diversions.” But when the day came, instead of

rejoicings, the Governor had to mourn over the dead corpse of his only son.<sup>1</sup> And on October 25, 1760, that aged and good king was taken from the nation. When the news of it arrived, the pastor of the Second Baptist church in Boston preached from those words of Solomon, "Wo to thee, O land, when thy king is a child;" which is a truth that others have had occasion to remember since. And because the great reformation, in and after the year 1740, was begun and mainly carried on among Pædobaptists, many had asserted that the Baptist principles always came in at the tail of a reformation, when the life of religion was gone, and people were for settling down upon the bare letter of Scripture. For a dozen years, this argument was much harped upon, until it was silenced in these parts by clear evidence to the contrary.

The Second Baptist church in Middleborough ordained their pastor on January 26, 1758.<sup>2</sup> And our Third church in the town was formed and organized in 1761. And though we have three meeting-houses of our denomination in this town, yet the nearest are nine miles apart, and the farthest above eleven. On April 1, 1761, Mr. William Carpenter, and his church at Norton, were established in the Baptist order, and he enjoyed a considerable blessing upon his labors both there and in Attleborough; and some revivings were granted in several other parts of the land. But a much greater work came on in June, 1762, in the Third Baptist church in Middleborough, and prevailed through the year, and extended its blessings into other societies and denominations. The subjects of this work discovered much more of fruitfulness in their understandings, and good government of their passions, than appeared in the revival twenty years before. And it was very evident, that the labors of Baptist ministers were the chief means of beginning and carrying on this work; which was powerful, undoubtedly, to the

<sup>1</sup>Langdon's sermon on said day, pp. 45, 46.

<sup>2</sup>This church was formed November 16, 1757—ED.



saving benefit of many souls. And though the world said, they spent so much time in religious exercises, that they would all starve, or come to want and misery, yet the contrary was remarkably demonstrated, by the dispensations of Providence. For in many places almost the whole staff of bread was cut off, by a severe drought; while a few seasonable showers, in the parts where people were so much engaged in religion, caused not only a good supply for themselves, but also a large quantity to impart to others the next spring. This was very convincing to many. Divine influences upon the souls of men were more extensively granted afterwards. Near the close of 1763, such a work began under Mr. Cleaveland's ministry in Ipswich, as caused the addition of ninety communicants to his church, in less than a year. A like blessing was granted in Providence and in Norwich, and a greater one on the east end of Long Island, of which Mr. Buell published a narrative. The work extended to New York, New Jersey, and elsewhere. The beginning and progress of a revival at Woodstock was also very remarkable. As Mr. Noah Alden passed through the town in December, 1763, he preached a sermon to a few people, one of whom<sup>1</sup> had been a chief leader in mirth and frolicking among young people there. But God was pleased to direct an arrow of conviction to his heart, which ended in conversion in March, 1764. No sooner did this news come abroad, than four of his former companions went one evening to try if they could not draw him back to his former ways again. He willingly retired with them to an adjacent school-house, where they spent the evening together. But, instead of turning him back to vanity, he prevailed with them to appoint a religious meeting the next week, which led on to others of that kind, until a large harvest of souls was granted there. And who could help rejoicing, to see a large number of young people turned from lying vanities, to an earnest engagement in religion, and the great affairs of

<sup>1</sup>Biel Ledoyt.—Ed.

the soul and eternity! Yet the minister and professors with whom they met for worship, finding that a cold formality could not give them satisfaction, appointed a fast, and called in the neighboring ministers to assist therein; who fell to exclaiming against false teachers, Satan's turning himself into an angel of light, separations, Anabaptism, &c.; which plainly taught those young believers, that edification, the great end of Christian society, was not to be enjoyed in that way. And they being convinced of the truth of believers' baptism, a church was constituted in that order in February, 1766; and on May 29, 1768, the man who had been their chief leader from vanity to real religion was ordained their pastor; under whose ministrations great blessings have been granted since. And such a door is now opening for the removal of ancient prejudices, as had not been before in many ages.

The covenant of circumcision gave those who were born in it a right to treat all others, both as to worship and commerce, as no others had any right to treat them. A right to office also in that church was hereditary. When our Saviour came, he fulfilled the law, both moral and ceremonial, and abolished those hereditary distinctions among mankind. But in the centuries following, deceitful philosophy took away the name which God has given to that covenant, (Acts vii. 8) and added the name *Grace* to it; from whence came the doctrine, that *dominion is founded in grace*. And although this latter name has been exploded by many, yet the root of it has been tenaciously held fast and taught in all colleges and superior places of learning, as far as Christianity has extended, until the present time; whereby natural affection, education, temporal interest, and self-righteousness, the strongest prejudices in the world, have all conspired to bind people in that way, and to bar their minds against equal liberty and believers' baptism. But the writings of our learned ministers in England have communicated much light in this country; to which more was added by the travails

and labors of our southern fathers and brethren. And hereby the Philadelphia Association<sup>1</sup> obtained such an acquaintance with our affairs, as to bring them to an apprehension that it was practicable and expedient to erect a college in the colony of Rhode Island, under the chief direction of the Baptists; wherein education might be promoted, and superior learning obtained, free of any sectarian religious tests. Mr. James Manning, who took his first degree in New Jersey College in September, 1762, was esteemed a suitable leader in this important work. Therefore on a voyage to Halifax, in July, 1763, he called in at Newport, and proposed the affair to the Honorable Samuel Ward, John Gardner, Josias Lyndon, and other Baptist gentlemen and friends; who readily concurred therewith, and entered upon the use of means to accomplish it. And notwithstanding secret contrivances, and some open attempts against it,<sup>2</sup> an ample charter for the purpose was granted by their Legislature, in February, 1764. In the summer following, Mr. Manning removed to Warren, to preach to a society newly formed there, and to begin the school. In September, 1765, he was chosen President of the college, and on September 7, 1769, seven young gentlemen took their first degrees therein, and it was removed to Providence the next Spring, where a further account of it may be given hereafter. Mr. Hezekiah Smith, a classmate with Mr. Manning, having travelled and labored in the gospel as far southward as Georgia, returned and came into New England in the spring of 1764, and was received to preach in the pulpits of Pædobaptists, in Providence, Rehoboth, Attleborough, Ipswich, Newbury, and other places, with an evident blessing upon his labors. He expected to return to New Jersey in the fall; but a vacant parish in Haverhill prevailed with him to alter his purpose, so as to stay and preach with them. Hereupon some ministers, who

<sup>1</sup>A yearly meeting of the Baptist churches in those parts, which began in 1707.

<sup>2</sup>These matters are more fully treated in a subsequent chapter. Their whole history is given in Manning and Brown University. pp. 46—62, 465—482.—ED.



had freely received him as an itinerant minister, turned and exerted all their influence against him.<sup>1</sup> Yet many seals were granted to his ministry, and a Baptist church was formed in Haverhill, on May 9, 1765, and he became their pastor ; before which there was but one small Baptist church in any part of our country northward of Boston. Their increase also elsewhere made others very uneasy.

Dr. Benjamin Lord published a discourse in 1763, wherein he says :—

Some few, I perceive, begin to hearken to corrupt doctrines, which tend to their renouncing of their infant baptism, and their interest in the very ancient covenant with Abraham and his seed ; which you may be assured is a dangerous road, and often issueth very fatally ; . . . witness the Anabaptists in Germany, two hundred and forty years ago, and others since.<sup>2</sup>

Directly upon this, he, with six other ministers, made some additions to Dickinson's Dialogue, and got it reprinted at Providence. In a preface to it, they say :—

It seems people do not think in season what a sinful, God-provoking and soul-destroying evil it is, to break over God's institutions. First be wavering, unsettled, not steadfast in any right principles, nor in the covenant in which their infant baptism declares them to be ; and then break covenant, and separate themselves, as being in their own esteem holier and better than others. It is hid from them, that evil men and seducers wax worse and worse. It is hid from them, or rather they will not see, that they have fell into the way of Cain, and are in danger of perishing in the gainsaying of Core.

<sup>1</sup>“On the 13th of June, 1765, Mr. Smith writes :—‘ I went to the Fast kept at Bradford, and heard Mr. Flagg and Mr. Tucker preach, and in my opinion souls are to be pitied who sit under such preaching. Then went home, and something expected to have more stones thrown into my chamber that night, after the ministers had reflected so much upon myself and the people who had separated from them.’ And this was in the very place where, eight months before, three or four hundred people had assembled to hear the prayer and exhortation offered by Mr. Smith at the evening worship of the family. On the 10th of July he writes :—‘ Went to Newbury to Mr. Ward's ordination. Mr. Cleaveland and Mr. Lasley ordained him in the alley of Mr. Parsons's meeting-house. I was not invited to dine with the ministers, neither did I speak with one of them.’ Yet this was Mr. Cleaveland who had given Mr. Smith such a cordial welcome at Chebacco, and for whom he had preached with such evident tokens of divine favor ; and this was Mr. Parsons's meeting-house, in which Mr. Smith had preached to about four thousand people, as it was supposed, less than a twelvemonth before.” Centennial Discourse of the First Baptist Church, Haverhill ; Rev. A. S. Train, D. D. ; p. 20.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>Discourse on Sober Mindedness, pp. 16, 17.

A sight of this discourse from the minister where the author was born, and from whom he separated, moved him to send the Doctor a printed letter in 1764, to open the injustice and abusive nature of such treatment of mankind;<sup>1</sup> to which he returned no answer, but has since been more friendly to the Baptists than before. As Dr. Gill had answered said dialogue, a copy of this new edition was sent to him. An addition to it was made in these words, viz. :—

St. Irenæus, who lived about a hundred and fourteen years after the death of Christ, being the disciple of St. Polycarp, who was the disciple of St. John the Evangelist, says, in his epistle, *Ad. Rom. lib. 5*, “The church received a tradition from the apostles, to administer baptism to little children, or infants.” By *tradition*, [say these ministers,] the ancients meant the word of God, agreeable to that of the apostle, 2 Thess. ii. 15; iii. 6.<sup>2</sup>

Upon a sight of this, Dr. Gill published an advertisement, in the end of the London edition of his reply to Clarke, wherein he charges this passage as a forgery, and challenges the whole literary world to produce or point out any such passage in the writings of Irenæus, if they can; and says, “What a wretched cause must infant baptism be, to require such management as this!” Various methods have been taken to wipe off this reproach, if possible. The first I heard of was, that those ministers sent to Yale College, and there found a Latin translation of Irenæus, which had that passage in it. I was afterwards told, by one of their most learned ministers, that the controversy turned upon men’s

<sup>1</sup>“A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Benjamin Lord, of Norwich; occasioned by some harsh things which he has lately published against those who have dissented from his sentiments about the Ministry, the Church, and Baptism. By Isaac Backus, pastor of a church of Christ in Middleborough. ‘Great men are not always wise. . . . I said, I will also answer my part, I also will show mine opinion.’ Job xxxii. 9, 17.”

“April 9, 1764. Mr. Lord, the minister where I was born, has treated us, and the truths which we hold about the ministry, the church, and baptism, in so abusive a manner, in three pieces which he has published within this twelvemonth, that I have thought it to be real duty to write some things to him thereupon; and finished the same to-day.” Backus’s Manuscript Diary.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Dialogue, p. 5.

different opinions about the meaning of a Greek word or two ; which therefore could not properly be called a forgery. But in 1781, Mr. Moses Hemmingway, of Wells, published a piece upon infant baptism, wherein he would persuade us, that it was only a slip of memory in those ministers to write Irenæus, when Origen was the person intended ; and therefore that Dr. Gill discovered a very bad temper, in making such a noise about so harmless a mistake. To which I reply, that those ministers name Origen in their next paragraph, and say he lived about a hundred and ninety years after Christ. And how came a minister a hundred and eighty miles from them to know that they meant Origen, in the disputed passage, when it does not appear that they ever knew it themselves ? However, the use of the secular arm has ever been their worst argument.

When the Legislature at Boston broke in upon their own exempting law, in 1752, the Baptists were so much alarmed as to call several meetings,<sup>1</sup> and to elect Mr. John Proctor their agent, to carry their case to England ; and they subscribed above a hundred pounds therefor ; and he drew a remonstrance upon the subject, which was presented to the Assembly at Boston, in May, 1754. It stated matters so plainly, that a motion was made by some to take the signers of it into custody ;<sup>2</sup> but Governor Shirley, newly returned from Europe, convinced them of the impolicy of such a step ; and then they appointed a committee to confer in a friendly way with the Baptists ; and matters were shifted along, until the war came on, and their design for England was dropped. At length all their exempting laws for Baptists and Quakers expired, and the Assembly of November 23, 1757, made a new one, wherein both denominations were again included

<sup>1</sup>A meeting was held in Medfield, March 15, 1753, one in Bellingham, May 23, and one in Boston, February 6, 1754.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>A copy of this Remonstrance is preserved in the Backus Manuscripts. It is a paper of much merit and historic value. We hope the time is not far distant when this, and other papers of kindred interest relating to our early history in New England, will be published.—ED.



in one act. By it no Baptists were to be exempted from ministerial taxes, in the places where they lived, "but such whose names shall be contained in a list or lists, to be taken and exhibited on or before the 20th of July annually, to the assessors of such town, district, precinct, or parish, and signed by three principal members of the Anabaptist church to which he or they belong, and the minister thereof, if any there be ; who shall therein certify, that the persons whose names are inserted in the said list or lists are really belonging thereto, that they verily believe them to be conscientiously of their persuasion, and that they frequently and usually attend public worship in said church on the Lord's days." And the like was required of the Quakers. It was continued in force thirteen years ; and no tongue nor pen can fully describe all the evils that were practiced under it. Only because a difficulty arose, in 1763, between the Third Baptist church in Middleborough and their minister, so as to prevent his signing a new certificate for them, they were all taxed to the parish worship. And though, after distress was made upon some, they were advised to apply to Plymouth Court for help ; yet, instead of affording any, they took twenty dollars more from them. And this was but a trifle, compared with what was done at Haverhill. For on May 23, 1765, a paper was given to their parish assessors, which said :—

This may inform you, that we who have formed ourselves into a Baptist church, according to the laws of this government respecting Baptists, called by some Anabaptists, do hereby certify, that we verily believe that Major Edmond Moors, and Mr. John White, merchant, are conscientiously of our persuasion, and that they do frequently and usually attend public worship with us on the Lord's days.

This was signed by the minister and three principal members. Yet after this was given, the first parish in said town met, and voted a large sum of money to build them a new meeting-house ; and taxed the Baptists with the rest, to pay both that and the parish minister's salary. And on Septem-

ber 15, 1766, they seized a large quantity of Mr. White's goods for that tax. For this he sued the assessors, at their County Court in December; but the action was continued till March, and then was carried up to their Superior Court by way of demur. It was to have been tried at Ipswich, in June, 1767; but it was then put off, because two Baptist gentlemen, a major and a captain, were not allowed to be witnesses of plain facts, concerning the seizure of said goods; neither could a few hours be obtained, though requested, to fetch other witnesses from Haverhill. Their adversaries then moved for an agreement, to have the case tried the next term, and that the same should be a final trial. This was concurred with, and the agreement was entered by the Clerk of the Court. The next term was at Salem, in November, when, after a fair and full hearing, the jury found for the Baptists thirty pounds damages and costs. This was immediately complained of as excessively high; therefore, rather than not have the matter settled, Mr. White consented to remit twelve pounds of it; and the Court gave judgment to have the rest paid. Yet the lawyers prevailed to have it referred to a future Court, whether they should not have another trial. And finally, in June, 1769, another trial was brought on, and the case was turned against the Baptists; which in all cost them about eighty pounds. The reason given for violating an agreement in Court, about a final trial, was that it was a matter of great consequence. And the plea which finally prevailed was built upon the ambiguous clause, belonging thereto, in their certificate law. It might mean a baptized church member, or only a steady worshipper therewith. The Court owned that the latter was the intent of the law; yet, because those words were not in their certificate, though that meaning was full in it, the case was turned against the Baptists. And the reason given against admitting any of them as witness of plain facts, was because they were parties concerned; that is, because the Congregationalists are the majority, they may violate their promises

to the minority, in matters of great importance ; and may construe words as they please, and refuse to allow the minority to be so much as witnesses, of plain facts, because, forsooth, the majority are not parties concerned !

The noise about this case reached as far as Philadelphia, and inquiry was made from thence, what it meant ? We were told that a noted minister in New England, wrote for answer, that where the Baptists could get the power, they were as bad oppressors as those they complained so much of ; which story was framed from the following actions :—On September 11, 1765, a Baptist minister<sup>1</sup> was ordained in South Brimfield, whose preaching was agreeable to some Pædobaptists near him, who disliked a minister then ordained in the east part of that district, of their denomination. They therefore got some of the Baptists to join with them in a petition for a new parish there. Upon which the Assembly at Boston, January 15, 1766, incorporated the west part of said district into a new parish, invested with all the powers and privileges, and subjected to all the duties of other parishes, without any mention of the Baptists in the whole act. Hereupon the majority of this parish made a tax for the Baptist minister, the most of whose church lived without those bounds ; and some within never concurred therewith. When the year came round, those Pædobaptists moved to have the Baptist meeting-house voted to be the parish meeting-house ; and because they would not thus give away a valuable house, built for a Baptist church, and chiefly by men who did not live in that parish, the first movers in said taxing scheme refused to pay their own tax. A gentleman from Boston was then their collector ; and, seeing the matter must be tried, he told me that he resolved to act impartially ; and therefore made distress upon one Baptist, who had ever opposed that scheme, and upon one of the other party. The case was then carried to Springfield Court, where it was soon turned against the Baptist minister ;

<sup>1</sup>James Mellen.—ED.



and why? he had studied both Greek and Latin, but he had neither an academical degree, nor an approbation from the majority of the ministers in that county, which was their legal test of orthodoxy. He continued the beloved pastor of that church, until he finished his course with joy, August 5, 1769; after which that church sent a confession abroad, among their brethren, of their fault in not opposing said taxing scheme as they ought to have done, a copy whereof is before me. How mean then was the pretence, that the Baptists hereby discovered as bad an inclination as their opponents did!

As great meanness was discovered at Haverhill. The want of learned ministers had often been cast as a reproach upon the Baptist churches; but when such a one was obtained there, all manner of evil reports concerning him could not suffice, without many instances of personal abuse. A beetle was cast at him as he was walking the street one evening, which he took up and carried to his lodgings. Also a stone, large enough to kill him, was cast through a window near his head, where he was in bed. And his enemies went so far as to cut off his horse's mane and tail in the night, and to set up a paper upon the door where he quartered, threatening worse treatment to him if he did not depart; and as he went to preach at Solomon Kimball's in Bradford, Amos Milliken, a Sheriff, came at the head of a mob to prevent it. And as Mr. Smith was going to begin the worship of God, the chair he stood behind was snatched away; and the man of the house tried in vain to quell the tumult, and to command peace in his own house. At length Mr. Smith, with undaunted resolution, engaged in his public work, and the rioters withdrew, and gave no further disturbance to the exercise. And though some of them laid wait for him in the evening, yet it was so ordered that he did not return home, until the coldness of the air forced them to quit their cruel design. After Mr. Kimball's decease, his widow, who also was of the Baptist society in Haverhill, and had the

same certified to Bradford assessors, yet was taxed to their parish worship. And late in a winter evening she was seized for it, and carried some miles; and then, calling at an inn, she was prevailed upon to pay the tax; after which she was left to return home, in the dead of the night, through frost and snow, to her three small, fatherless children.<sup>1</sup> Also the widow Mary Corliss, of Haverhill, a mem-

<sup>1</sup>Of the following letters the former is published in *Life and Times of Backus*, p. 184, and in *Cramp's Baptist History*, p. 530; the latter, we think, was never before published:—

“MR. BACKUS:—I understand that you are collecting materials for a Baptist History, in which you propose to let the public know how the Baptists have been oppressed in Massachusetts Bay. This is to let you know, that in the year 1768, in a very cold night in the winter, about nine or ten o'clock in the evening, I was taken prisoner and carried by the collector in the town where I live, from my family, consisting of three small children, in order to be put into jail. It being a severe cold night, I concluded, by advice, while I was detained at a tavern in the way to jail some hours, to pay the sum of about 4-8 L. M., [Legal Money] for which I was made a prisoner, it being for the ministerial rate. The reason why I refused paying it before, was because I was a Baptist, and belonged to the Baptist society in Haverhill, and had carried in a certificate to the assessors, as I suppose, according to law. Thus they dealt with a poor widow woman in Bradford, the relict of Solomon Kimball, late of said town, at whose house the Rev. Hezekiah Smith was shamefully treated by many of the people in Bradford; who came, headed by the Sheriff, Amos Milliken, at a time when Mr. Smith was to preach a sermon in our house at the request of my husband, and warmly contended with him, and threatened him if he did proceed. However, Mr. Smith went to begin service by singing, notwithstanding the noise, clamor, and threats of the people. But one of their number snatched the chair, behind which Mr. Smith stood, from before him; upon which my husband desired Mr. Smith to tarry a little till he had quelled the tumult; but all his endeavors to silence them were in vain. Upon which my husband desired Mr. Smith to begin public service; which accordingly he did, and went through then without further molestation.

“MARTHA KIMBALL.

“Bradford, September 2, 1774.

“N. B.—The above I can attest to. It may be observed that the tavern whither they took me, is about two miles from my house. After I had paid what they demanded, then I had to return to my poor fatherless children through the snow, on foot, in the dead of the night, exposed to the severity of the cold.”

“MR. BACKUS:—I understand that you are preparing materials for a Baptist History of New England, in which you design to give an account of their sufferings in these parts. This is to inform you that amongst many others, I am a sufferer. For since I was baptized and belonged to the Baptist church in Haverhill, through mistake I was omitted in the list which was carried in to the assessors one year, which the West Parish of Haverhill, where I live, took the advantage of, and rated me in the ministerial rate; which I refused paying, because I was a Baptist, had a regular standing in the Baptist church, constantly met with them for public worship on the

ber of the Baptist church there, had one of her cattle taken away for a ministerial tax. "Thus," says she, "I was oppressed in a province where there is a universal cry for LIBERTY! the cry of the widow and fatherless they regard not!" So far from it, that further attempts were now made to inflame the resentment of the ruling party against all dissenters from their worship.

A book was published in 1767, and dispersed through New England, wherein it was said of the Baptist churches in general, "They little think, as I charitably believe, how far they join with the gates of hell, in opposing the church of Christ, by laying waste the nursery, out of which his vineyard is supplied."<sup>1</sup> As if natural growth could fit children for Christian communion; or, that a requiring fruits meet for repentance, in order for admission thereto, were a destroying of them. In the same book were many odious reports concerning the separations in and after 1744; several of which were not true in fact; and having introduced a plea in favor of those people, that they are not such now, the writer says, "It is readily granted, that they are now much more moderate and civil than they were in that day, are very peaceable, kind, obliging, good neighbors. . . . But what does this reasoning argue? Why it only shows that they have lost a degree of their own original spirits, as Separates."<sup>2</sup> And yet he began his preface with saying, "The special occasion of the following discourses was, the revival of the spirit and principles of Separation and Anabaptism." Accord-

Lord's days, helped support the ministry in said Baptist church, and never went to hear the Congregational ministers in the West Parish, where I live. However, they took one of my cattle out of my yard, by distress, and sold it at a public outcry for said rate. Thus I was oppressed, a few years past, in the province where there is such a universal cry for liberty. The cry of the fatherless and the widow they regarded not.

"Haverhill, September, 1774.

"P. S.—The above distress was made in the year 1770. This I can attest to.

"MARY CORLISS.—ED.

<sup>1</sup>Fish's Nine Sermons, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 158.



ing, therefore, to his own testimony, they were peaceable, kind, obliging, good neighbors, after that spirit was revived. Neither were his party any more consistent with themselves in a following publication. For upon the British claims of taxing America, an evident design was forming to establish Episcopacy therein; to guard against which, it was said, in 1768:—

We are, in principle, against all civil establishments in religion. . . . It does not [indeed] appear to us, that God has entrusted the State with a right to make religious establishments. If the State in England has this delegated authority, must it not be owned, that the State in China, in Turkey, in Spain, has this authority also? . . . . And as they must severally be supposed to exert this authority in establishments conformable to their own sentiments in religion, what can the consequence be but infinite damage to the cause of God and true religion? And such in fact has been the consequence of these establishments *in all ages, and all places*.<sup>1</sup>

And this publication appeared of such importance, to the annual Association of ministers from all parts of Connecticut, in June, 1768, that they published a letter of thanks to Dr. Chauncy therefor, in a Boston newspaper. Yet, for these forty years, he has written the most to uphold their religious establishments in New England, of any man upon earth. And a still greater demonstration of the pernicious effects thereof is before us.

<sup>1</sup>Chauncy against Chandler, pp. 152, 153.



## CHAPTER XXI.

ASHFIELD PLANTED.—LAWFUL RIGHTS DENIED TO THE BAPTISTS THEREIN.—TO WHICH NEW ACTS WERE ADDED.—AND SLANDEROUS PUBLICATIONS.—LIKEWISE A SPITEFUL PROSECUTION.—RELIEF FROM ENGLAND.—REMARKS THEREON.—OPPRESSION AT MONTAGUE.—AND AT BERWICK.

A grant was made in 1735, to Ebenezer Hunt and others, of a township six miles square, westward of Deerfield. A plan of it was to be drawn in sixty-three equal shares ; one of which was to be for their first minister, one for the ministry, and one for the school ; and certain improvements were to be made upon each of the other shares, within three years after the confirmation of the plan. They were also to settle a learned, orthodox minister, and to build and finish a convenient meeting-house for public worship. By reason of succeeding wars, the planting of that place was delayed until 1751. In the mean time a complaint was entered to the church in South Hadley, that one of their members had propagated a reproachful lie concerning Chileab Smith, a father therein. But the complaint was disregarded, which moved him to inquire into the constitution of the church ; and, to his surprise, though the words of their covenant implied a profession of saving faith, yet he found that such a profession was not held to be necessary in order for their communion. He then labored to convince the church that this was a dangerous error ; and, being invited, he went to a meeting of ministers at Hatfield, August 6, 1750, and laid



before them many scriptural reasons against it. But they gave him no satisfaction, only referred him to Mr. Edwards, who was dismissed from Northampton two months before, for rejecting that principle. Edwards approved of Smith's reasons against it, but not of a separation therefor. But as Smith judged otherwise, he openly withdrew from the church ; and in 1751 he removed to Huntstown, with eight children, when there were but two or three families therein. Others came in soon after, and lived without public worship for some time ; and then eternal concerns were so clearly opened to his mind, that he called the inhabitants together, and prayed with them, and expounded the Scriptures to them, to such good purpose that his children and many others were hopefully converted. In November, 1753, his eldest son was called to preach the gospel ; and, with great hazard and expense, they kept their station, and maintained public worship, through a bloody Indian war of seven years' continuance ; near the close whereof they were led into believers' baptism, and became an organized church on August 20, 1761 ; by assistance from Killingly, Sturbridge, and Stafford, and by the close of that year the church increased to twenty-four members, half of whom were males.

In 1762, a State tax was imposed upon that plantation ; and as the law exempts all settled ministers therefrom, two of their assessors allowed their minister that privilege. But, for this, the other assessor entered a complaint against them to Springfield Court. The Baptists desired time to prove that their minister was regularly ordained ; but the Court refused it, or to allow of any appeal from their judgment ; and extorted a large fine and costs from them, for not taxing their minister contrary to law. When he was ordained, there were but five families, out of nineteen in the place, against him ; but, the danger of the war being over, others moved in, and in February, 1763, they ordained Mr. Jacob Sherwin over that party ; and not only gave him all the privileges of the first minister of the town, but also a hun-

dred pounds settlement and sixty-four pounds a year salary, to which they added a large sum to build them a meeting-house, and taxed the Baptist minister and his people with others to pay it. The plantation being only a proprietyship, it was said the exempting law for Baptists did not extend there; and when it was incorporated in 1765, by the name of Ashfield, the word *Support* was artfully inserted, which had no place in their original grant, nor in the incorporating acts of the towns of Charlemont and Lanesborough, passed at the same session. New taxes were hereupon imposed upon the Baptists in Ashfield, to support a minister whom they never chose; but their oppressors at length found themselves ensnared in the work of their own hands. For proprietors and inhabitants are two distinct bodies of men in law, governed by different rules; the votes of the latter being equal, but of the former according to their interest; so that the vote of a proprietor, who owns five hundred acres, is equal to ten inhabitants who own but fifty acres apiece; and by their act of incorporation, the power of taxation in Ashfield was put into the hands of the inhabitants and proprietors, both of whom could not do it together, nor either of them apart, according to that act.

This confusion afforded some respite to the Baptists; but hearing of further designs against them, they came to the Assembly at Boston, of May 25, 1768, with a memorial of their services and sufferings in promoting that plantation, and a prayer for a full exemption from taxes to a worship that they did not join with.<sup>1</sup> A committee of three was appointed upon it; two of whom brought in a report to grant the petition; but Edson, their chairman, was for giving time to their opposites to bring in objections; and to him the Assembly hearkened, and on May 31 ordered that the clerks of the inhabitants and proprietors of Ashfield should be notified of this memorial, that they might bring in objections against it, on the second Tuesday of the next session

<sup>1</sup>This petition is in the *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 346, 347.—Ed.

of the Assembly, and that the further collection of taxes from the petitioners should be suspended in the mean time. Colonel Israel Williams was received a representative from Hatfield the next day, who was the most resolute judge in fining the Ashfield assessors in 1762; and before the close of this session a new act was passed which took the power of taxation out of the hands of the inhabitants of Ashfield, three years after the town was incorporated, and empowered the proprietors to impose what taxes they judged proper for the support of their minister, as well as other uses, and to lay the same wholly upon the lands, in whose hands soever they might be, which were to be sold, if the owners refused to pay the tax. This was done under the same influence which has since involved the nation in blood and confusion. For in the preceding winter our Assembly came into a resolution to write letters to sister colonies, to request them to unite in the use of prudent means against the attempts that were making, to bring America to be taxed where they were not represented. On June 30, our House of Representatives were required to rescind that resolution; which Edson, Williams, and fifteen more, voted to do; but ninety-two members rejected that arbitrary mandate, one of whom was Captain Benjamin White, a Baptist, representative from Middleborough. For this noble stand against tyranny, that House was dissolved, and no other called through the year; so that the Baptists could have no hearing, while power was on the side of their oppressors. The latter advertised their lands to be sold on May 3, 1769. But when they met, such defects were pointed out in their proceedings, that the sale was omitted; and each party came with memorials to the Assembly of May 31.<sup>1</sup> Contention betwixt the House and the Governor served as an excuse for not hearing the Baptists, but their oppressors were heard; and on July 5, it was resolved, "That all the votes and transactions

<sup>1</sup>See extracts from the memorial of the Baptists, *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 347, 348.—ED.



of the said town of Ashfield, in their several town-meetings, since their incorporation to this time, be and are hereby ratified and confirmed; any omissions or neglect of making due and proper returns on the several warrants for calling the same meetings, or any of them, notwithstanding." Williams and Leonard (two of the Mandamus Counsellors in 1774) were of the committee who framed this resolve, though it was not passed into a law. July 15, the Assembly was prorogued to January, and in the meantime a new tax was imposed in Ashfield, and the Baptist lands were advertised to be sold April 4, 1770. In January they sent to Boston, but the Assembly was prorogued to March 15, when they sat at Cambridge, but did not receive the Baptists' petition until the 27th, and it was dismissed April 4, the day their lands were to be sold. Some friends in Boston laid the cruelty hereof before some of the members so plainly, that their petition was resumed on April 10; but instead of their granting any relief, they were only put to more costs, to notify their oppressors to bring in objections. On April 4, the assessors of Ashfield met, and sold three hundred and ninety-eight acres of the Baptists' lands to support the worship of the opposite party. For a demand upon the Baptist minister of one pound, two shillings, they sold ten acres of his home lot. His father had one of the best orchards in the town, which is of special service in a new place; yet twenty acres of improved land, containing the main of his orchard, with a burying-yard, and a small dwelling-house, were struck off to Elijah Wells, for thirty-five shillings; who, on May 4, came and forcibly entered upon it, and measured it off; and the next day came and pulled up a number of the smaller apple trees, and carried them away, and offered to sell the house. These facts were proved by a number of witnesses before authority, though, to shift off the odium they were exposed to, by a new survey, they left out the house and burying-yard, and then accused the Baptists of falsehood in the first account. But nothing better could be

expected, from men who could deal so unjustly, and could laugh at a mock sermon, delivered by Wells upon that occasion, which breathed as great cruelty as words could express. Repeated applications were made to the Legislature for help, but in vain; and the Baptist agent was at last told plainly, that it was not worth while to wait any longer, for they would keep them under the law by which those lands were sold, as long as they saw fit. Receiving such a plain declaration from a member of the Assembly, in the presence of others, he went and acquainted the Baptist ministers of Boston therewith, who thought proper to publish an advertisement to all the Baptists in this province, dated July 31, requesting them to bring in exact accounts of their cases and sufferings to their ensuing Association,<sup>1</sup> "When meas-

<sup>1</sup>A yearly meeting of their churches, begun at Warren, September 8, 1767, called The Warren Association.—B.

This important movement in the history of New England Baptists, the founding of the Warren Association, merits a more extended notice. The leader in the movement was James Manning, pastor of the church in Warren and President of Rhode Island College. Wishing "to unite all the churches of his faith and order in New England in an association similar to the one formed in Philadelphia," "he submitted his plan to the members of his own church, who cordially seconded his views, as appears from a formal vote on the subject, which we find recorded under date of August 28, 1766." See Manning and Brown University, p. 74. Other pastors entered into the project, and a conference was called, in which eleven churches were represented. The pastors and delegates of only four churches, Warren, Bellingham, Haverhill and Second Middleborough, were ready for organization, the rest fearing lest the new body would conflict with church independence. Isaac Backus, the first Clerk, commenced his Minutes as follows:—

"Whereas there hath of late been a great increase of Baptists in New England, which yet have not such an acquaintance with each other and orderly union together as ought to be, it has been thought by many that a general meeting or association might be a likely means to remove this evil, and to promote the general good of the churches. Therefore, a number of elders, being occasionally together last year, did appoint a meeting at Warren, in Rhode Island Colony, on September 8, 1767, and sent an invitation to others of their brethren to meet them there, to confer upon these affairs. Accordingly a considerable number of elders and brethren met at the time and place appointed; and Elder John Gano, from New York, opened the meeting with a suitable sermon from Acts, xv. 9."

The Association soon proved an important agency in the struggle for religious freedom. In 1769 it adopted the following "plan to collect grievances."

"Whereas complaints of oppressions, occasioned by a non-conformity to the religious establishment in New England, have been brought to this Association, and whereas the laws obtained for preventing and redressing such oppressions have,

ures will be resolutely adopted, for obtaining redress from another quarter than that to which repeated application hath been made unsuccessfully. Nay, complaints, however just and grievous, have been treated with indifference, and scarcely, if at all, credited." Accounts were accordingly brought to a meeting of fifteen churches at Bellingham, September 11, which unanimously resolved to apply to the King in Council for relief, if it could not be obtained here ; and they made choice of agents and a committee for the purpose ; and wrote to their southern brethren for assistance in

upon trial, been found insufficient (either through defect in the laws themselves, or iniquity in the execution thereof) ; and whereas humble remonstrances and petitions have not been duly regarded, but the same oppressive measures continued : This is to inform all the oppressed Baptists in New England that the Association of Warren, (in conjunction with the Western or Philadelphia Association) is determined to seek remedy for their brethren where a speedy and effectual one may be had. In order to pursue this resolution by petition and memorial, the following gentlemen are appointed to receive well attested grievances, to be by them transmitted to the Rev. Samuel Stillman of Boston ; namely, Rev. Hezekiah Smith of Haverhill, Rev. Isaac Backus of Middleborough, Mr. Richard Montague of Sunderland, Rev. Joseph Meacham of Enfield, and Rev. Thomas Whitman of Groton in Connecticut." Backus's Manuscript Minutes, copied and preserved by Rev. S. Hall.

In pursuance of this plan, the committee published the advertisement above referred to. It appeared in the Boston Evening Post of August 20, 1770, and was as follows :—

"To the Baptists in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay, who are, or have been, oppressed in any way on a religious account. It would be needless to tell you that you have long felt the effects of the laws by which the religion of the government in which you live is established. Your purses have felt the burden of ministerial rates ; and when these would not satisfy your enemies, your property hath been taken from you and sold for less than half its value. These things you cannot forget. You will therefore readily hear and attend, when you are desired to collect your cases of suffering, and have them well attested ; such as, the taxes you have paid to build meeting-houses, to settle ministers and support them, with all the time, money and labor you have lost in waiting on courts, feeing lawyers, &c. ; and bring or send such cases to the Baptist Association to be held at Bellingham ; when measures will be resolutely adopted for obtaining redress from another quarter than that to which repeated application hath been made unsuccessfully. Nay, complaints, however just and grievous, have been treated with indifference, and scarcely, if at all, credited. We deem this our conduct perfectly justifiable ; and hope you will pay a particular regard to this desire, and be exact in your accounts of your sufferings, and punctual in your attendance at the time and place above mentioned.

"Boston, July 31st, 1770."

—ED.



the design.<sup>1</sup> This alarmed some politicians at Boston, who urged the Baptists to present an address to our Legislature, and they promised to exert their influence in their favor. A memorial was therefore drawn, and was signed in behalf of the Baptist churches, by their ministers at Boston and Haverhill ;<sup>2</sup> wherein the late testimony of our Assembly, against the taxing of people where they are not represented, was commended, and this liberty was pleaded for in the church, and in particular that the said Ashfield law might be repealed, and their property be restored ; that others who had suffered in such ways might recover damages, and equal religious liberty be allowed to all. Soon after this was received by the Assembly at Cambridge, a piece was published from thence, dated October 22, 1770, representing that the Baptists had complained without any just reason at all, and that it would be serviceable to have an authentic account of the Ashfield affair published. And, after many great, swelling words about the charity and lenity of these times, the writer said, “ It was astonishing to most people among us, to hear the newspaper complaints exhibited by the Baptists ; they could not so much as guess from whence they could arise.” This was inserted in three or four Boston papers.<sup>3</sup> And then, on November 15, the Assembly gave orders that Ashfield proprietors should be notified to bring in objections against the first prayer of the Baptists’ memorial, to their next session. And their old certificate law being out of date, a new one was framed, which changed their title to Antipædobaptists, and changed the time of giving in certificates to the first of September ; which were to be signed by three or more principal members, and the minister, if there be any. The word Congregation was to be used instead of the word Church ; and the parishes were empowered to vote the Bap-

<sup>1</sup>A Circular Letter, written by President Manning, was sent to the churches, requesting them to collect money to defray the expense of this appeal to the king. It is given in full in Manning and Brown University, pp. 185, 186.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>It is published in *The Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 177—180.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>It is in the *Boston Evening Post* of October 29.—ED.

tists clear, if they pleased, without certificates. But the word *Conscientiously* was still retained, and the certificates were required to be given in annually to parish assessors.

Mr. Davis, clerk of their committee, now called them together ; and, upon examination, they declared themselves not satisfied with this law, and they advised Davis to answer the Cambridge piece. He did so, in the Massachusetts Gazette of December 27, by giving a plain and concise view of the Ashfield affair, and asserting that it was the sole cause of their complaining publicly at this time ; and signed himself A BAPTIST. But instead of any fair reply, a writer appeared in the Boston Evening Post of January 7, 1771, saying:—

There is a little upstart gentleman, lately settled in [this] town, who calls himself A BAPTIST ; and the youth discovers a most insufferable arrogance and self-sufficiency. . . . I very much suspect, that he is one of those deluded young men, who are employed [by the enemies of America] to defame and blacken the colonies, and this town and province in particular. . . . I am of the same persuasion in religion with this young hero, . . . and I cannot say what the General Assembly could do for the Baptists in general, or the Ashfield brethren in particular, that they have not done. . . . And I believe this is the opinion of the Baptists in general, and of all others but enthusiastical bigots.

And he had the impudence to annex to this, and much more of the same kind, the signature of A CATHOLIC BAPTIST. When Mr. Davis came to see it, he said he would never put pen to paper to answer such mean and dirty stuff. In the Gazette of February 7, came out another piece, from a minister near Ashfield, supposed to be of Deerfield, who said, “It is a very common observation among us, that the people called Separate Baptists in these parts will not stick at any false representations to serve their purpose ;” which he attempted to prove by facts. But Elder Smith, of Ashfield, came down and answered him in the same paper, of March 21, when, from public records, he fairly turned that charge back upon the minister who advanced it.

The Assembly met at Cambridge six days after, to whom was exhibited so large a bundle of reasons against their granting the first prayer of the Baptists' memorial, as cost them twenty shillings to get a copy of it from the Secretary, it being twelve pages in folio. And yet there was no attempt in it to prove that the word *Support* was in the original grant of Ashfield, nor other points that were truly to the purpose. Two passages in it may give a proper idea of the whole performance. They say, "Natural rights are in this province wholly superceded in this case by civil obligation, and in matters of taxation, individuals cannot with the least propriety plead them." Exactly the doctrine of the British Court at this time; but which never could be carried into effect at any time without covering it with religious pretences; therefore, they went on to flatter our rulers in that respect, and to say of the Baptists, "Some have had the effrontery to say, that the standing ministry is corrupt, ministers themselves unconverted, the churches impure and unholy, admitting unconverted and unsanctified persons into their communion." As if it were a very uncharitable and daring thing, for any not to look upon them to be a sanctified people, when they absolutely refused to profess themselves to be such! For our excellent Edwards was rejected by that county with much heat and bitterness, only for his insisting upon such a profession from communicants. We had direct intelligence that this piece was drawn in Judge Williams's family, and it was signed in the name of the proprietors of Ashfield, by Jonathan Taylor, Timothy Lewis, Samuel Belding, Benjamin Phillips, Philip Phillips. The three latter were the assessors who sold the lands before mentioned, and the last of them was the man who got his brother assessors fined in 1762, for not taxing their minister contrary to law. The Council and House joined in a committee upon said memorial; and they say in their report:—

There is an essential difference between persons being taxed where they are not represented, therefore against their wills, and being taxed when



represented, and when what is taxed is only in consequence of what was the very condition of their grant. . . . What other method can be devised, but to sell the lands of those who *conscientiously say that they will not be as good as their word, or keep their covenant*, though it be so greatly to the prejudice of the public! . . . Your committee find, that in the sale of those lands there was no unfairness, but every thing was quite fair, quite neighborly, and quite legal. . . . It is our opinion that said petition be dismissed.

W. BRATTLE, by order.

Accordingly, on April 24, the Council voted to dismiss it. And though the House was alarmed, and did not concur with this, but proposed to have a bill brought in to repeal the Ashfield law, yet their proposal was rejected, and the petition with it. And what a cloud was hereby brought over an oppressed people! On the side of the oppressors was power, but they seemed to have no helper. But, behold! in a Boston paper of October 21, it was declared that the King in Council had disannulled that law. What a surprise did this occasion! How could so despicable a people get access to the throne, and obtain such an act, especially in so short a time! However it was soon said, that there was a man in Hatfield that would hinder the Baptists from reaping any advantage thereby. This was a mystery, till it was explained on November 8, when two officers, with a numerous aid, came to old Mr. Smith's house before he was up in the morning, with a warrant from Judge Williams to seize his person, and to search his house and shop for bad money. Smith readily promised the use of his keys, and desired that no lock might be broken, and also that he might have liberty to pray with his family before he was carried off. Liberty for prayer was granted by one officer, but in the mean time the other broke the lock of his shop, and damaged his goods there, and afterwards in his house; and then he was carried before a Court at Judge Williams's, where he was compelled to stand till ten witnesses were examined; from whom no evidence could be obtained against him, "nor any circumstance tending to prove the indictment," as seven of them gave from under their hands a few days after. Yet Mr.

Smith was held a prisoner through the night, in a cold room, and denied either bed or fire, to the great injury of his body, he being above sixty years old, and infirm before. In the morning Judge Williams insinuated several things against him, without suffering him to make any answer, and bound him over to their next Superior Court, in large bonds with sureties. Like warrants were issued, it was said, against their pastor, who then happened to be absent on a journey. Reports were therefore industriously spread in the country, that notwithstanding all their talk, those Baptists were a parcel of money makers, and their minister was gone to scatter it, and would never dare to return. But herein they were soon found liars; and though the country was ransacked in the spring for witnesses against his father, yet they all failed them. At last a man was brought near thirty miles for the purpose, who testified to the Court at Northampton that he should not know the man if he met him in the room. So he was discharged, and the law was open for him to sue for damages for this malicious prosecution. But, lo! a bankrupt, son to the minister of Sunderland, had been brought over the river to enter the complaint against him, so that he might never obtain any recompense in this world. Yet God often takes the wise in their own craftiness.

When such noise was made at Boston about the Ashfield affair, Governor Hutchinson happened to look and find that the word *Support* was not in the original grant of those lands; and perhaps he might hope, that by relieving the Baptists, he should draw them to his side of the controversy betwixt America and Britain. Be that as it may, he privately sent for one of their committee, and advised him to send the Ashfield law to a friend in London, who might present it to the King in Council; and he promised to write to Governor Bernard, who passed it, to use his influence to have it repealed. This was done, and its repeal was effected, and then their oppressors had their turn at waiting upon one Assembly after another unsuccessfully; for though several

acts were framed for them, yet the consent of the Governor could not be obtained, till they found out what his mind was, and conformed to it. In January, 1773, the Assembly appointed a committee out of their members, to go up to Ashfield, and to hear both parties, and then to make a tax to pay all that they judged to be behind concerning Mr. Sherwin's settlement and meeting-house, and the charges which had arisen about the same; and what they judged any of the Baptists had paid more than this, should be refunded to them, and for the future they should stand upon the same footing with their brethren elsewhere. The doings of that committee were confirmed by a subsequent act in February, 1774, and the small tax which was laid upon some of the Baptists they paid, and by this time their oppressors were sick of their own minister, and he was dismissed from his office, so that they lost the right in the town which they took so much pains to wrest from Elder Smith, besides the other unspeakable evils and scandals which sprang from thence.

This account is carefully taken from our printed laws, journals of the House of Representatives, and other writings and testimonies; and our opponents are welcome to point out any mistakes therein, if they can. A gentleman of great influence in our Legislature informed me, that it was asserted in the Assembly, that those petitioners acted with the rest in settling Mr. Sherwin, but now wanted to slip out their necks, and leave an intolerable burthen upon their neighbors, which story had great influence to hinder the granting of any relief to the Baptists. Whereas, if they had been informed of it, they would have demonstrated that this story was a glaring falsehood, as also was the report of the committee whereof Brattle was chairman; for Wells, who bought Smith's lot, sued him for cutting the grass upon it in August, 1770, and upon trial in the winter, the Court turned the case against Wells, because the sale was *not legal*, two months before Brattle reported that it was *quite legal*.



The law being repealed, all those sales of land fell, of course. And who can describe all their guilt in those transactions ! If it had been right to tax the Baptists to Sherwin's settlement and meeting-house, taxes of six times the value of his settlement had been laid upon them, before the law was made to sell their lands for his support ; yet, for three years after, their oppressors asserted with brazen impudence, that those taxes were only to fulfil the original condition of their grant. But according to what our delegates to Congress asserted in Philadelphia, October 14, 1774, before many witnesses, the settling of Elder Smith in Ashfield in 1761 fulfilled that condition, and the denying of him the privileges of the first minister of the town was a violation of the faith of government ; for which, as well as for their great trouble and expenses, caused by subsequent acts, they have received no recompense.

Because Governor Hutchinson procured relief to that society, some have blamed the Baptists for not adhering to him and his party in the general contest betwixt Britain and America ; but they had good reasons against it then, and have greater since. For many copies of his letters have been found among us, one of which is dated from Boston, January 23, 1771, directed to Governor Bernard, wherein Hutchinson expressed his earnest desire that Castle William might not again be put under the pay of this Province,<sup>1</sup> and that the power of choosing the Council might be taken from our representatives ; and, said he, “ Something, I repeat it, must be done this session, to shew the sense parliament has of our past conduct.” And after further urging to inflammatory measures, he says :—

The Baptists have made a little stir, and complain of being oppressed ; but in general they have all the liberty which can consist with a legal establishment for maintaining public worship, without which we should be worse than we are. No Baptist in principle is obliged to pay to ministers

<sup>1</sup>In a clandestine way he had given it up to the British troops, September 10,

upon the establishment. All who attend a Baptist minister are not exempt; if they should be, the congregations would be broke to pieces in all parts of the province.

He then gave reasons why the Ashfield law ought to be repealed, and said to Bernard:—

I suppose you would not have passed it, if you had considered the force of the word *Support*, and that it militated with the general law in favor of Baptists. I have no doubt it was artfully slipt in by one of the Hampshire representatives.

Equal religious liberty, therefore, was far from his design, though he appeared for their help in that case. And the artful representative referred to was, for being one of the seventeen *rescinders*,<sup>1</sup> set up as Chief Judge of their County Court; in which office he oppressed other Baptists in the following manner.

They formed a regular church in Montague, July 1, 1765; and gave certificates to parish assessors according to law; yet they were taxed to other worship, and distress was made therefor. Several attempts were made in parish meetings to have this disorder rectified, but in vain, therefore Samuel Harvey sued the Montague assessors for a cow and a calf, that had been taken from him for a tax to their minister. After the writ was served, a parish meeting was called, which voted to stand by their assessors, and said they meant to try the merits of the cause, whether these were the Baptists whom the law exempted or not. When Judge Williams came to deliver the case to the jury, he did not call that point in question, yet he said, “The law says, the certificate shall be signed by three principal members of the Baptist church, and the plaintiff is one of the signers, and he cannot certify for himself, therefore there are but two, and the law says there shall be three.” To him the jury hearkened, and turned the case against the Baptists, in August, 1769.

<sup>1</sup>In the General Assembly of Massachusetts, June, 1768, a vote was taken upon the question of rescinding the measures of the previous Assembly in opposition to British oppression. Seventeen voted in favor of rescinding and ninety-two in opposition. See p. 152; Bancroft, Vol. VI. p. 165.—ED.

They appealed to the Superior Court the next month ; but the action was continued till September, 1770, when the case was called, and the witnesses appeared ; but because they were Baptists, they were not admitted, and the case was again put off, and the Baptists were required to pay half the jury's fees. At last, on May 1, 1771, a trial was brought on, when Judge Oliver and others turned the case against the Baptists, upon the same point as Williams had before done. Upon which it is to be remarked, that before 1752, their laws required but two signers to a certificate ; and the law they now acted upon allowed of no more than three, where there was not a minister, as was the case at Montague ; and the signers could not have been exempted, if their names had not been in the list. Yet because they were strained upon, and not others, the case was turned against them, without trying the merits of the cause, as was promised ; and after the expense of above a hundred dollars, the Baptists were left without any hope of remedy from our Courts. To worry them out, distress was again made upon their committee, and not others. A yoke of oxen was taken from Harvey, a cow from Sawyer, and Major Richard Montague was seized and carried six miles toward the prison, kept all night, and then released, and the officer went back and took a swine that he was fattening for his family, O how dark was this cloud over that little flock ! Yet one of them said to his brethren, " Who knows but that God will bring good out of this evil ? though we are stripped of our substance, yet unborn ages may praise him for this." Yea, they themselves have lived to see some happy fruits of their sufferings. One thing which gave a check to oppression, was a determination of authority, that the ministers of Baptist churches were lawful ministers, so as to have a right to marry people, and to be exempted from civil taxes. This was determined by the Superior Court, in one trial at Worcester, and another in Hampshire ; the last of which was this year.



None of their opponents appeared willing to release them, till they had tried the matter, and were taught the folly of oppression by experience. If we turn our eyes from the west to the east, we shall see further evidence of this. By assistance from Haverhill, a Baptist church was regularly constituted at Berwick, in the county of York, June 28, 1768. Mr. Joshua Emery was their teacher, though not ordained. They gave certificates according to law, yet were all taxed to other ministers; and John Gowen was imprisoned therefor in December, 1769. The like was done to Mr. Emery the next month; and he sued for recompense in both cases, but they were delayed till July, 1770, when Emery asked for a summons to bring the collector with his warrant. The judge ordered the clerk to give one, to bring the collector with his original list. He came with it, but not the warrant, and the counsel for the defendant said there could be no trial without the warrant; and the case was turned against Emery. He appealed to the Superior Court, where the collector was brought with his warrant; but then he swore that he did not take Emery as a prisoner. Emery told the Court that he did take him and carry him to York, and held him as a prisoner thirty hours, and requested time to prove it, either now or at the next term. This was denied him, and judgment was given against him. With difficulty he obtained a continuance of his friend's case; and the parish committee promised to let the Baptists alone till that case was tried. Yet in a few days another tax was imposed and demanded. Upon this a complaint was entered to authority against the former collector for false swearing, and he was bound over to Court upon it; but he repeatedly said, he hoped the day of death would come before that day of trial. And behold! he died suddenly just before the Court! Yet this did not hinder the next collector from coming and seizing Mr. Emery's horse, while he was visiting a sick person. The parish assessors were sued therefor

in January, 1771, and though they tried a number of crooked ways to delay the matter, and to defeat the design, yet both this and his friend's case, that was continued, were finally turned against the assessors. John Emery, of York, joined to said society, and got the same certified to the assessors of the parish where he lived; yet he was taxed to their worship, and when he was from home, a collector came and seized his pewter therefor. But experience has since taught their oppressors to cease from such violence. This account is carefully taken from authentic vouchers now in my hands.

## CHAPTER XXII.

A REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.—BAPTIST CHURCHES FORMED THERE.—PUBLICATIONS OF THEIR OPPONENTS PROMOTED THEIR CAUSE.—MISTAKES ABOUT CATHOLICISM.—BOLTON CONTROVERSY.—AN ACCOUNT OF MR. DAVIS.—REASONS WHY THE BAPTISTS REFUSED TO GIVE ANY MORE CERTIFICATES.—OPPRESSION AT SCARBOROUGH, AND AT WARWICK.—ALSO AT CHELMSFORD.

A small Baptist church at Newton, in the south borders of New Hampshire, formed out of a Separate society there in 1755, was the only church of that denomination in that province, before 1770. In and after the year 1764, many were hopefully converted in several parts of it; where believers' baptism has since been introduced in the following manner:—About the year 1720, one Scammon, of Stratham, on Piscataqua River, married Rachel Thurber, from Rehoboth, who was a firm believer in the Baptist principles; but the country round her was so full of prejudices against them, that in forty years she could gain no more than one person to join with her therein; and that was a pious woman in the neighborhood, who travelled fifty-five miles to Boston, and was baptized by Elder Bound. But Mrs. Scammon had such a desire to have others enlightened, that having obtained Norcott's Plain Discourse upon Baptism, she carried it to Boston, with a design to get it reprinted upon her own cost; though when she came to speak to a printer about it, he informed her that he had then one hundred and ten copies of that book on hand; whereupon she purchased them all,



and came home and gave them away to her acquaintance, and to any people who would accept of them ; by which means they were scattered through the country, and among poor people in new plantations. And she would often say to her pious neighbors, that she was fully persuaded, that a church of Christian Baptists would be formed in Stratham, though she might not live to see it. This came to pass soon after her death, and the like in other places, by the following means :—One Samuel Shepard, born at Salisbury, near Newbury, in 1739, was brought to the knowledge of internal religion when very young ; and he learned the art of physic, and settled in the practice of it in Nottingham, near Piscataqua River. He had no knowledge of Mrs. Scammon, nor of any other Baptists, till he happened to see, in a house that he visited, one of Norcott's books ; and upon reading it, there appeared such a fair examination of the Scriptures therein, as struck his mind with conviction that believers' baptism was the truth. But it being a principle hardly named among his acquaintance, the conviction went off for some years. In the mean time, as Mr. Ebenézer Jones, a Baptist minister, travelled through Stratham, he preached a lecture, which was the means of the conversion of a young man named Eliphaleth Smith, who was afterwards called to preach the gospel ; and in January, 1770, was ordained the pastor of a Congregational church in a part of Nottingham called Deerfield. In May following, as he was preaching to his people upon the obligation that all who love Christ are under to keep his commandments, the command to believe and be baptized was opened with peculiar clearness to the preacher's mind ; upon which he immediately found such a want of any warrant for bringing their infants, as caused him to pass it over in his sermon. and put him and most of his church upon such an examination of that matter, as convinced them that they had not been rightly baptized.

Before this, Mr. Shepard, by hearing about Elder Smith, of Haverhill, was brought again to think of what he had

read in Norcott's book, and to search the Scriptures concerning baptism, and was thereby convinced that the arguments for infant baptism were groundless, and was made willing to become a Baptist. Hereupon he improved opportunities of discoursing upon the subject with Christians of his acquaintance, which was large ; inquiring whether he and they might not have been heretofore mistaken about the subjects and manner of baptism ? Many were hereby put upon searching into the matter, which issued in a turn of mind to believers' baptism. And Mr. Hezekiah Smith was sent for to Deerfield, where, on June 14, 1770, he baptized their minister and thirteen others ;<sup>1</sup> and within seven days he baptized twenty-four more, who belonged chiefly to Nottingham, Brentwood, and Stratham ; and among those thirty-eight persons were a Congregational minister and two deacons, with Mr. Shepard ; who, by special teaching, was brought freely to begin the great work of preaching the gospel on July 8, 1770, and he soon had some evident seals of his ministry. Mr. Smith, of Deerfield, with the most of his church, were united and established as pastor and flock in the Baptist order. Churches in that order were also formed in Stratham, Brentwood, and Nottingham ; who all united in calling Mr. Shepard to receive ordination, and for the present to take the pastoral care of them. He was accordingly ordained at Stratham, September 25, 1771 ; and the ordination sermon, preached by Mr. Stillman, of Boston, was printed, together with the charge, by Mr. Smith, of Haverhill, and the right hand of fellowship by President Manning, of Providence ;

<sup>1</sup>They first sent for President Manning, but, on account of the distance, he excused himself, and Mr. Smith went in his stead. Mr. Smith wrote in his diary as follows :—" Wednesday, June 13th. Went to Deerfield, and preached from Acts xi. 23, ' Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.' After sermon, I examined the Rev. Eliphalet Smith and a number of his hearers for baptism. Thursday, 14th. I preached in Mr. Smith's meeting-house from Col. ii. 11, 12. After sermon I baptized fourteen persons." See Manning and Brown University, p. 122.—ED.

and their principles have now had a very extensive spread in those parts. Thus Mrs. Scammon's bread, cast upon the water, seems to have been found after many days; the books that she freely dispersed being picked up, and made useful to many. Neither did the writings of learned ministers against the Baptists, weaken their cause, but strengthen it, as what follows will shew.

Mr. Moses Mather, of Stamford, in his first piece upon the covenant, published in 1769, owns ingenuously, that the covenant of circumcision, in Gen. xvii. was not, strictly speaking, the covenant of grace, but a divine institution whereby that nation was taken into visible covenant with God; and that the ordinances of that church were appointed as means for the regeneration as well as comfort and strengthening of its members. And he labors hard to prove that the covenant is the same with the Christian church; and that the Lord's Supper is "a converting ordinance." And to those who hold that persons ought to profess saving faith, in order to come to full communion, he says, "This scheme makes infant baptism a mere nullity, or thing of naught. To me this conclusion appears just and unavoidable."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ebenezer Farris, of Stamford, was roused hereby to such an examination of the subject, as not only brought him to embrace believers' baptism, but also to publish a defence of that doctrine at New York. And he and others called Elder Gano from thence to baptize them in 1770; and in 1773 a Baptist church was constituted at Stamford, and another at Greenwich, ten miles nearer to New York. At the same time, the increase of the Baptists in Boston (above sixty members being added to the First Baptist church there) caused a great uneasiness among other ministers, and Dr. Chauncy published five sermons in 1772, to persuade people that it was their indispensable duty to come up to full communion in their churches. And after laboring hard to

<sup>1</sup>Discourse, pp. 17, 54, 57.



remove their objections against coming, especially because of fears that they were not born again, he says :—

The divinely appointed way, in which persons become members of the visible church of Christ, is utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that, in order to their being so, they must be the subjects of saving faith, or judged to be so. . . . The children of those who are members of Christ's visible church are, by the constitution of God, from their first coming into existence, members of his kingdom in common with their parents. So it was under the Jewish dispensation ; and so it is now, [under the Christian] if there is any validity in one of the principal arguments, by which we vindicate our practice, in baptizing the infants of those who are members of Christ's church.<sup>1</sup>

The consequence indeed appears clear, that if there is any validity in their main argument for infant baptism, their want of regeneration ought not to keep them back from the other ordinance. But then this is directly against the testimony for the purity of their churches, which this author produced in 1743, cited on page 57.

The disposition of that party is further discovered by another publication at this time. A Convention of their ministers at Bristol, May 20, 1772, agreed to publish a discourse, entitled, Catholicism ; or, Christian Charity ; and it was printed this year at Providence. Many excellent things are inserted therein, about charity and a catholic disposition and behavior, and false pretences thereto are well exposed, especially in the following passage. Say they :—

Liberty and candor are the great basis of human happiness. We often hear persons extolling the advantages of both, who yet seem to be really acquainted with neither. For if they have any design on foot, any end to answer, or purpose to carry into execution, if you entertain different views, and with freedom speak your mind, you are instantly deemed an enemy, and you must be treated as such ; so that if you escape without the sword, it is not so much owing to a generous spirit of liberty, as a want of power. To supply the defect of their power, your reputation must be blasted, your influence weakened, and your interest injured. Such liberty deserves no better name than tyranny, and such freedom the basest slavery.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>His sermons on Breaking of Bread, pp. 106, 107.

<sup>2</sup>Catholicism, p. 65.

The truth of this sentence is readily allowed ; but to whom is it applicable ? Those ministers evidently intended it against such as refused communion with their churches. They name the people who began to separate therefrom about the year 1744, and represent them as being furious then against giving and receiving ministerial support, but as now being so inconsistent and dishonest as to come into the same practice themselves.<sup>1</sup> Had they said assessing and forcing, instead of giving and receiving, they would have discovered a regard to truth and consistency that is now wanting in their performance. At this time they censure those as very unreasonable men, who hold immersion to be essential to baptism.<sup>2</sup> And, speaking of asking ministers to preach occasionally, the writer says :—

I cannot see the propriety nor expediency of inviting the assistance of any man, be his profession what it may, that denies me the rights and privileges of the church of Christ. . . . If we cannot eat and drink of one bread and one cup, in token of mutual fellowship, I see no reason why I should encourage such persons in their uncharitableness.

Is not this the charity they had before condemned, which begins and ends in self?<sup>3</sup>

In October, 1770, an act of their Legislature was obtained, to incorporate a number of men in Providence into a society, by the name of “The Benevolent Congregational Society in the town of Providence,” for the purpose of raising and managing a fund, to support public worship in the first church of that denomination there. This was the first act of that nature ever passed in that Colony ; and it was published in a pamphlet the next year ; in the introduction to which they recite their law against the use of force to support ministers,<sup>4</sup> and say upon it, “Although this act was wisely intended, yet it was followed with great inconvenience in those societies where the support of the minister was thought to be a duty incumbent on the people, as thereby the burthen of the expense thereof was borne by very few

<sup>1</sup>Catholicism, pp. 37, 38. <sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 64. <sup>3</sup>Ibid, pp. 25, 66. <sup>4</sup>See Vol. I, p. 482.

persons. The Congregational society aforesaid has had a large share of this difficulty." And could they have had their desire, they would, undoubtedly, have introduced tax and compulsion for their support. But as the college in that town was formed upon another plan, the ministers refused to encourage it.<sup>1</sup> And though its charter, granted by their Legislature, explicitly exempts the persons and estates of the President and Professors of the college "from all taxes," yet the vote of a town-meeting in Providence was procured in August, 1772, to limit the meaning of those words to colony taxes only. And because the Baptist assessors in 1773, left said officers out of their town tax, a town-meeting was called February 7, 1774, which censured those assessors therefor, and published their resolves in the Gazette against extending that law to town taxes. It is hoped that many who were active in that affair are now convinced of their error, and are sensible that they did not then show the regard they ought to have done both to liberty and to learning. Their honorable exertions in this cause since are freely acknowledged; and these facts are only mentioned to remove the ill effects of those publications, and to guard against such evils for the future.

For the same end I shall give a concise view of another controversy at this time. A minister<sup>2</sup> at Bolton, in Worcester county, after being intemperate at other times, drank to excess on a sacramental season, so as to shock the whole congregation. But when his church called him to account therefor, he at first denied the crime, and then confessed it; yet he violated his promise about offering satisfaction to the

<sup>1</sup>One of the first class of graduates in that college [Charles Thompson] was ordained at Warren, July 3, 1771, who has since been a great blessing in those parts. Others also were very successful, so that in the years 1771 and 1772, about two hundred and thirty persons were baptized, in the adjoining towns of Warren, Swanzy, Rehoboth and Dighton. And President Manning being called to preach and administer ordinances to the Baptist church in Providence, caused a great turn in their affairs; and ill treatment from others was made to work for their good.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Goss.—ED.



congregation. Three councils were called, who were all for continuing him in office there. But as he had assumed the power to negative the acts of the church, even when dealing with him, and to dissolve their meeting without their consent, they called a meeting themselves, and chose a Moderator and Clerk, and made some proposals to their minister, and adjourned. But as he gave them no satisfaction, they, at their second adjournment, August 8, 1771, dismissed him from his office, and from their communion; and the town concurred therewith. This alarmed many others, who exerted all their influence to prevent the settlement of another minister there in those circumstances. Mr. Zabdiel Adams published a sermon against it in 1772, which was answered by one, who styles himself A Neighbor; and each wrote again upon the subject in 1773. Two editions of Mr. Wise's works were also now published; on the other hand a pamphlet came out, said in the title page to be published "by the Convention of the ministers of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay, at their annual meeting in Boston, May 26, 1773;" the whole labor of which is to prove, that a church has not a right to dismiss their minister contrary to his consent, or to the direction of others, where a Council of them can be had. For this end, they insert a passage from the Cambridge Platform, which says, "In case an elder offend incorrigibly, the matter so requiring, as the church had power to call to office, so they have power, according to order, (the council of other churches, where it may be had, directing thereto) to remove him from office." Now it is a known rule in grammar, that though a parenthesis is useful in its place, yet the sense is good without it. So are councils useful in difficult cases, if they hold up true light, but it is a violation of said rule, to make the direction of a council essential to the church's act in dismissing their minister. Another authority produced by this convention is a passage from Mr. Hooker, which declares for the use of councils, and for the right of churches to withdraw their communion

from an erroneous church, that will not be reclaimed. This will not be denied ; but the question in hand was, Where the power of doing it lies ? Whether in the body of each church, or in a collection of officers above them ? To confute the latter, and to establish the former of these points, was the main design of Hooker in that book ; of which I have given plain proofs,<sup>1</sup> and am ready to advance more if necessary. Directly after their pamphlet came out, a Council of seven churches, viz., four from Boston, one from Cambridge, one from Roxbury, and one from Dedham, met at Bolton, August 3, at the call of said deposed minister and his party. And, in their printed result, they have given it as their opinion, that the act of the church in deposing him ought to be looked upon as a nullity, because it had neither his consent, nor the direction of a Council of others, where it might have been had. They also deny its being the act of the majority of all the male members of Bolton church ; which last assertion was soon after proved not to be true in fact. In another publication he is introduced, saying, "I have three times been tried by my peers, and so far acquitted, that but little blame hath been cast upon me." And his advocate says of him, "Having never been condemned by the lawful judgment of his peers, and being still their minister in the eye of the constitution, he is justly entitled to the support they at first contracted to give him ; neither is it in the power of his people to withhold it."<sup>2</sup> Which is making them lords over God's heritage, instead of being examples to the flock. Yea, it is claiming such a power in the church, as the British Court, even at this time, denied in the State. For the Governor and Council of the Massachusetts were, in some cases, a Court of Appeal, finally to decide executive matters ; and Governor Hutchinson claimed a negative power in this, as well as in his legislative capacity. But as the question concerning it was referred to the King

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 474.

<sup>2</sup>Adams's Reply to the Neighbor, pp. 13, 52.

in Council, it was determined against the Governor, that he should not have a negative power in that Executive Court; which determination he was obliged to publish in Boston in January, 1774. And it is most certain, that the Christian church is only an executive judicature; yet those ministers were now contending for a negative power therein.

And though the Baptists had no hand in the Bolton controversy, yet it serves more clearly to justify their opposition to such claims of power at this time. A leader in this opposition was Mr. John Davis, son to a Baptist minister in the State of Delaware, and educated at the college in Philadelphia. He came to Boston in May, 1770, and was ordained pastor of the Second Baptist church there, the 9th of September following. He was one of the committee who signed the address of the Baptist churches to our Legislature the next month; but perceiving soon after that our charter gave them no right to support any religious worship by tax and compulsion, he plainly declared it to men of note; which was the chief cause of the mean and scurrilous treatment from the press, that he met with the next winter. General Brattle, when acting as chairman of the committee of the Legislature in the spring, treated him in like manner; but when he had done, Davis arose, and distinctly answered his arguments, without taking any notice of the personal abuse that was offered him. A gentleman present said, the worth of the man never appeared so great before. September 10, 1771, the Warren Association made choice of him as their agent, to use his best endeavors, by the advice of their committee, in concert with their agents in London, to obtain the establishment of equal religious liberty in this land. And the compiler of this history was then requested by a number of ministers to undertake the work; and Mr. Davis promised his assistance therein. But, alas! he had done but little towards it before his health failed, and his life followed after. In August, 1772, he took a voyage to Philadelphia, hoping to receive benefit from his native air. And



obtaining some relief, and meeting with one of his brethren in the ministry, who was going to preach to the western Indians, he set out with him, in company with friends who were going to settle upon the Ohio. But on February 1, 1773, the following account was published in Philadelphia, viz.: "By advices from the Ohio we learn, that upon the 13th of December the Reverend John Davis, A. M., Fellow of Rhode Island College, and one of the members of the American Philosophical Society, died there, after an illness of three weeks, in the 36th year of his age." The minister he was with informs us, that some of his last words were these: "In a little time I expect to be with Christ, to see and know him as he is now known, and as he is not known. My faith in my Saviour is unshaken."<sup>1</sup>

In September, 1772, the author was chosen an agent of the Baptist churches in Mr. Davis's room; and the following events took place among them. Though their church in Chelmsford had given in certificates according to law, yet they were all taxed to parish teachers; and in a cold season, January 26, 1773, three of their society were imprisoned therefor at Concord, one of whom was eighty-two years old; and they commenced a suit in law for recompense; but their cases were long delayed. In Bellingham equal liberty was enjoyed, because there was none but a Baptist minister in the town; but a number of his hearers who lived in Mendon were so much oppressed with taxes to other ministers, that in the three preceding years they estimated their damages on that account at near fifty pounds. And these and other things being laid before the Baptist committee, May 5, they advised their agent to write to all their churches, to consider whether it was not their duty to refuse to give any more certificates to the power that oppressed them; and to bring in their conclusions upon it to their next Association.<sup>2</sup> And further light was held up by

<sup>1</sup>Jones's Journal, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>This Circular to the Churches is published in the Life and Times of Backus, pp. 188—190.—ED.

their enemies a few days after. For, to vindicate their practice, they published an account of all their exempting laws in the *Boston Evening Post*, of May 17, and as the first of them ordered Episcopalians in each parish to be taxed with the rest, and then that their ministers should draw the money out of the parish treasury, it was now said :—

Had the same prudent precaution been taken with respect to the Anabaptists, when they were exempted from being taxed towards the maintenance of the ministers of the churches by law established, those avaricious and dissolute persons, who get under water to wash away their minister's rates, without any expectation or desire of washing away their sins, would have had little or no temptation to declare themselves Anabaptists.

When the Warren Association met at Medfield, September 7, 1773, they concluded to refrain from giving any more certificates to that power<sup>1</sup>, for these reasons :—

1. Because it implies an acknowledgment, that civil rulers have a right to set up one religious sect above another, which they have not. 2. Because they are not representatives in religious matters, and therefore have no right to impose religious taxes. 3. Because such a practice emboldens the actors therein to assume God's prerogative, and to judge the hearts of those who put not into their mouths. 4. Because the church is presented as a chaste virgin to Christ; and to place her trust and love upon any others for temporal support, is playing the harlot, and so the way to destroy all religion. Hos. ii. 5. 5. Because the practice above-said tends to envy, hypocrisy and confusion, and so to the ruin of civil society.<sup>2</sup>

When the author came to Boston to complete the publication of his *Appeal to the Public*, he met with two printed letters against the design; to which he returned the following reply, on October 14 :—

MR. DRAPER :—As you have allowed a pretended Baptist room for two long letters in your paper of the 2d and 30th of September, I hope you will give a real Baptist room for a short answer to him in your next. I call

<sup>1</sup>See account of the discussion upon this matter in *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 191—193.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>*Appeal to the Public*, pp. 43—47.—B.

The above arguments are substantially, but not literally, quoted from the "*Appeal to the Public*." The *Appeal*, a pamphlet of sixty-two pages, is an earnest and vigorous plea for religious freedom. Mr. Backus submitted it to the Warren Association at the meeting in Medfield, and the Association requested its publication.—ED.

him a pretended Baptist, and think I have reason so to do ; for though he gives his word for it that he is of our denomination, yet the whole tenor of his letters is, to persuade us to be easy under the taxing laws of the other party ; and towards the close of his first letter, he says, " Had we for a little while borne only the little finger of the Episcopalian hierarchy, we should think the burthen comparatively light, though we were called to bear the weight of the loins of the Presbyterians of New England." And is not the hand of Joab in all this? For my part, I am not able to get a pair of scales sufficient to weigh those two great bodies in, the Episcopal hierarchy and the New England Presbyterians, so as to find out exactly which is heaviest. But if this pretended brother had felt what father Obadiah Holmes once felt in Boston from our opponents, he would not have been so easy as he now seems to be.

Hereby a stop was put to that mean and scandalous practice, of assuming the Baptist name in writings against their welfare. Neither did any answer ever appear to the above reasons for equal liberty, though oppression was still carried on under religious pretences.

By assistance from Haverhill, a Baptist church was regularly formed at Gorham, near Casco Bay, June 20, 1768. And Joseph Moody, a member of it, who lived in Scarborough, had the same certified annually to their parish assessors according to law ; yet distress was still made upon him for taxes to parish worship. For such a tax of about six dollars, a good riding beast was taken from him in 1771 ; he therefore presented proper vouchers of these facts to the Assembly at Boston, January 26, 1774, with a petition, that like the good Samaritan, they would again set him upon his own beast.<sup>1</sup> A committee was sent out upon it, whose report was to dismiss the petition, which was done. About this time eighteen men, of the Baptist society in Warwick, in a very cold season, were seized for a parish tax, and carried forty miles, and cast into Northampton jail. On Febru-

<sup>1</sup>"As the case of your petitioner somewhat resembles the case of the poor man, who, travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among evil men, your petitioner, from principles of charity and equity, doth believe that you will not pass by him on the other side of the way, but, with the good Samaritan, show pity, bind up his wounds, and set him on his own beast, which has been violently taken away." Extract from the petition of Joseph Moody.—ED.



ary 15, an account thereof was brought to the agent of the Baptist churches, who directly laid their case before the Legislature at Boston, praying that they might be released, that recompense might be made them, and effectual measures taken to prevent such things for the future.<sup>1</sup> But, though a committee was sent out upon it, no help was granted. This moved one of the Baptist committee to express his astonishment thereat, in the Gazette of March 3, and to ask how this news would be received in sister colonies, or at the British Court, from whence late help had been afforded to our Ashfield brethren? A reply hereto came out March 14, which said, "No one can deny that they have been in great trouble of late; and whoever considers how dangerous the occupation of counterfeiting an established currency is, they cannot greatly admire at it."<sup>2</sup> Which inuendo was caught at and enlarged upon in the Providence Gazette. Though in fact a Pædobaptist church member in Ashfield had, before

<sup>1</sup>"I have direct information that eighteen men of the inhabitants of Warwick, who belong to the Baptist church in Royalston, and had the same certified to the assessors of Warwick, last June, yet were seized last week, for the minister's rate of that town, and carried prisoners to Northampton jail; by which they are deprived of their precious rights, and their dear families, in a new country, are exposed to suffering greatly for want of their help. This is therefore to beseech your Excellency and Honors, as guardians of the rights of your people, immediately to order these men to be set at liberty, and that reparation be made of the damages they have sustained; and also to take some effectual methods, as in your wisdom you shall see fit, that, for the future, all persons within this province who shall demean themselves as good members of civil society, may not be despoiled of the aforesaid rights, under a pretence of supporting religious worship, but that all persons who shall presume thus to encroach upon the rights of their neighbors may be punished according to the demerit of their crimes." Extract from the above-named petition. The whole petition is published in the Life and Times of Backus, pp. 198, 199.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>The article in the Massachusetts Gazette of March 3, was signed "A Friend to Liberty, Civil and Religious;" that of March 14, appeared in the Boston Evening Post, and was signed "Veritas." It was well answered in the Gazette of April 7, over the signature of "Catholic." "Veritas" replied in two long articles in the Post of April 11, and April 18; the latter of which was accompanied by an article in the Baptist interest, signed "A Real Friend to his Country." Another article from "Catholic" was in the Post of May 2. This whole controversy is spirited and interesting, and well worth perusal. Of the authorship of the articles we are ignorant, except one dated April 18, of which Backus writes in his Diary, "April 19. My piece against Veritas was printed in the Evening Post of yesterday."—Ed.

this, been convicted of harboring a counterfeiting club at his house, for which the Court gave judgment that he should be fined, set in the pillory, and have his ears cropped ; while a Baptist member, whom they had ensnared, was only fined. Thus do men expose themselves, when they drag into religious controversy things which have no relation to it. In a Boston paper of April 7, the assessors of Warwick published a vindication of themselves in taxing those Baptists, in which they said :—

We apprehend that every body politic have a right to choose their religion, and to enact laws for its support, and that they ought so to do ; and since Congregationalism is the choice of the people of this province, the religion which our forefathers had in view to establish in coming over to this country, we think there is good reason why dissenters from us should pay to the support of it ; especially since it is one condition upon which they receive and hold their lands.

This last article is flatly denied, and let any of that party prove it if they can. And will any still plead for a practice that cannot be upheld without lying ! Another evil effect of it is before us.

One of the Chelmsford cases was now tried at Charlestown. Jonathan Sewall, the lawyer who was most active against the Baptists of Haverhill, undertook for them ; and he must needs put the collector as well as the assessors into the writ. The effect of which was, that the jury judged the assessors to be guilty, and the collector not guilty ; and that the Baptist should recover of the assessors three pounds damages and costs, while the collector should recover costs of the Baptist for carrying him to prison, where he was confined above three days. The guilty assessors soon had their expenses paid by the town ; but as the judges and the lawyer went off directly, the other Chelmsford cases were never tried, nor the small sum now adjudged to one of them received. No exempting law for the Baptists in this province was now in force. These things being heard of at Philadelphia, caused an uneasiness among the Presbyterians there,

and a man was sent from thence to Boston, and a new exempting act was passed at Salem in June ; after which it was declared in a Philadelphia paper, that relief was granted to the Baptists in the Massachusetts. Such pains have that sect taken to keep up their credit and influence in this country. But that act was so far from affording us any relief, that it required annual certificates to be recorded in each parish where the Baptists lived, a copy of which could not be had without fourpence of our money, which is threepence sterling ; the very tax upon a pound of tea that brought on the American war.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

A REVIEW OF ENGLISH AFFAIRS.—OF NEW ENGLAND IN PARTICULAR. CAUSE OF THE AMERICAN WAR.—HOW IT BEGAN.—CAUSE OF SO GENERAL A UNION THEREIN.—ITS PROGRESS.—THE VANITY AND FOLLY OF OUR ENEMIES.—DIVINE GOODNESS TO OUR LAND DISPLAYED IN THE ABILITIES, TEMPER, AND SUCCESS OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Disputes about power and gain, under a religious mask, could no longer be restrained to words, but must come to dreadful blows. To this those claims have always tended. When Henry VIII revolted from the church of Rome, and set himself up as head of the church of England, he ruled as tyrannically as the pope did; though his allowing the common people to have the Bible in their own tongue, gave much light to the nation. And a greater reformation was produced thereby, in the short reign of his son Edward, than the church of England has ever attained to since. Neither do their ideas differ so much from ours about facts, as about the names they ought to be called by. An Episcopal minister of considerable note, after thirty years' labor to promote their way in New England, gave the following account of the cause of its first plantation. Says he:—

While the virgin queen, of immortal memory, sat at the helm, she steered so steady a course, and rode with so tight a rein, that Calvin's English disciples, impregnated with the leaven of Geneva, could do little more upon their return, after the Maria persecution, than fret in their fetters, murmur, and mutter their discontents in secret. . . . To Elizabeth succeeded James, father of the martyr. He, imagining it more for his ease, threw away the

queen's curb, and rode with a snaffle. Under this soft sovereign the *non-cons* seem, by the Galiotism of the State, and Grindalizing of the church, to have grown into great numbers. But Charles resumed, in some sort, the heroine's bridle, and gave leave to Laud to make use of whip and spur; so the sturdy Puritan, unused to restraint, and growing restive, finding that flouncing and plunging would not throw down, ran away from his riders, and took sanctuary in New England. But, good God! how dearly did that most pious prince and holy prelate pay for this! and how fatal and lasting have been the consequences of that grand rebellion, that brought both of those great personages to the block!<sup>1</sup>

That is, Charles claimed a right to impose laws and taxes upon the people without their consent, and Laud endeavored to cover and enforce the same with religious pretences; and because they drove on furiously in that way, until both of their necks were broken, arbitrary teachers have canonized them for saints and martyrs, and have stigmatized resistance to such power with the odious name of *Rebellion*. After the flames of war which they kindled had raged through three bloody campaigns, between the king and parliament, their commissioners met at Uxbridge, January 30, 1645, to treat about reconciliation. But it could not be obtained, because a secret instruction from Charles to his commissioners said:—

As the king's duty is to protect the church, so it is the church's to assist the king in the maintenance of his just authority. Wherefore my predecessors have been always careful (especially since the reformation) to keep the dependency of the clergy entirely upon the crown, without which it will scarcely sit fast upon the king's head; therefore you must do nothing to change or lessen this necessary dependency.<sup>2</sup>

Before the reformation the pope rode foremost, and sometimes compelled princes to walk on foot, yea, to hold his stirrup; but since, as is here observed, they have been always careful to keep the reins in their own hands. And this contest has caused infinite mischiefs in New England.

The first planters of New England, requested no more

<sup>1</sup>Letters from Narragansett, 1752, by James M'Sparran, D. D., printed at Dublin, 1753, under the title of *America Dissected*, pp. 23, 24.

<sup>2</sup>Rapin, Vol. II, p. 510.

than equal liberty of conscience ; and though the crown would only give a conditional, and not an absolute promise thereof, “ yet, casting themselves on the care of Providence, they resolved to venture.”<sup>1</sup> On this foundation was New England planted in 1620 ; and this has been its only support ever since. For though the Massachusetts company came over ten years after, with an ample charter from Charles ; yet he and Laud soon attempted to vacate it, and at length positively required the company to send it back again.<sup>2</sup> And the loss of their heads, and the overthrow of Episcopacy, was the cause why these plantations were not then entirely ruined. In the mean time, an imagination of great purity at Boston emboldened the church to assume the whole government in this wilderness, with an expectation of exhibiting to the world such a view of the glory of Christianity, as had never before been seen. And the leaders here were enchanted with this bright image, until their charter was wrested from them in 1684 ; upon which the world resolutely took the bridle again into their own hands. And how flattering was their late prospect of riding where they pleased without control ? Methinks I hear the British ministry saying, “ Our fleets and armies have triumphed over all our enemies, and we are revered to the remotest regions. The wealth of both the Indies is ours, and our resources are boundless. The vast continent of North America is wholly at our command, and who can hinder our doing as we please ? Arts and sciences are already carried very high, and who knows how much greater improvements may be made ? As to religion, fanaticism and bigotry are quite out of fashion, and reason and liberty are the darling topics of the age. Episcopacy prevails in almost all our colonies, and soon will in the remainder. Parliaments have formerly made dreadful work ; cut off the head of one king, and driven another from his throne ; but those days of superstition and cruelty

<sup>1</sup>Prince's Chronology, pp. 57, 60. [147, 148, 151.]

<sup>2</sup>Hutchinson, Vol. III, pp. 105, 106.



are at an end. The Parliament is now entirely at our command ; and the establishment of its supremacy over the colonies is all that is wanting to complete the happiness of the empire ; and who can prevent so great a good ? Can a few factious fellows at Boston do it ? The thought is contemptible ! And we are assured, by the most respectable gentlemen upon the continent, that as soon as it is seen that government is determined to maintain its authority, opposition will cease, and the land will be at rest. At their head is a man,<sup>1</sup> who, by the best history of his country that was ever published, has discovered a perfect knowledge of their affairs, civil and religious. And his influence is so great, that after he was made Lieutenant Governor of the province, he was freely elected into their Council. At the same time he had the command of their castle, the key of their chief harbor, was Judge of Probate in their head county, and Chief Judge of their Supreme Executive Court through the colony ; until his Majesty has been pleased to raise him to the highest seat in their government. Who then can scruple the truth of his testimony, or the sufficiency of his influence to accomplish our desires ?”

I am sensible that these ideas will not please some men ; therefore the following facts are adduced to support them. The most plausible plea for the claim of Britain to tax America was, that we were indebted to her for protection. If so, why did she pay us large sums, for assisting her in her wars ? Our conquest of Cape Breton, in 1745, brought her into debt to us, for which she sent us over a good quantity of cash, whereby we were enabled to call in our paper money. Yet, through jealousy of our power, acts of parliament were passed in 1749 to prohibit, under great penalties, the erection of any tilt-hammers here to plate iron, furnaces to make steel, or slitting-mills to cut nail-rods ; although no country abounds more than ours with iron. All this and much more was patiently borne, and requisitions from the

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Hutchinson.—ED.

crown, of assistance in the succeeding wars, were obeyed beyond our proportion; for which large sums were repaid by parliament. Did this look as if they thought we were in debt to them? By no means. But soon after the peace of 1763, they passed an act to compel the colonies to furnish certain articles for a standing army therein in the time of peace;—the great engine of despotism. And as this act was but partly obeyed in New York, their legislative power was suspended, until they should do it fully. To this the stamp-act was added, to deprive America of any legal deeds of our lands, or securities for our money, without paying a tax therefor to Britain. And when they were forced to repeal that act in March, 1766, it was resolved, “that his Majesty in parliament, of right, had power to bind the people of the colonies by statutes *in all cases whatsoever*.” William Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, had delivered a sermon, the preceding month, before the society which supported their missionaries in America, wherein he called the inhabitants of it factious people, ready to laugh at the Bible; and said, “The spreading of *Gentilism* in the colonies calls for our rejected charity.” And to render them as odious as possible, he accused them of annually stealing slaves from the opposite continent, and sacrificing them to their great idol, the god of gain. “Nothing,” says he, “is more certain, than that the infamous traffic for slaves directly infringes both divine and human law. Nature created man free, and grace invites him to assert his freedom.”<sup>1</sup> Yet it is most certain that his party, in the southern colonies, and in the West India Islands, have had the chief hand in that infamous traffic. February 20, 1767, John Ewer, Bishop of Landaff, before the same society, said of the first planters of New England:—

What reproach could be cast heavier than they deserve? who, with their native soil, abandoned their native manners and religion; and ere long were found in many parts living without remembrance or knowledge of

<sup>1</sup>Gloucester's Sermon, February 21, 1766, pp. 11, 13, 25, 26.

God, without any divine worship, in dissolute wickedness, and the most brutal profligacy of manners. Instead of converting barbarous infidels, as they undertook to do, they became themselves infidels and barbarians. And is it not some aggravation of their shame, that this their neglect of religion was contrary to the pretences and conditions under which they obtained royal grants and public authority?

And having expressed his earnest desire and hopes of the speedy establishment of bishops in America, he says :—

This point obtained, the American church will soon go out of its infant state ; be able to stand upon its own legs, and without foreign help, support and spread itself. Then the business of this society will have been brought to the happy issue intended.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Thomas Bradbury Chandler, of New Jersey, now published a book upon the same subject ; wherein he owns it as the opinion of many, that the circumstances of the nation now afforded the most favorable prospect of the speedy establishment of bishops here, that had ever appeared since Queen Anne's death. Yet he had the face to declare that such a plan was agreed upon, “ that bishops shall not interfere with the property or privileges, whether civil or religious, of churchmen or dissenters . . . but shall only ordain and govern the clergy, and administer confirmation to those who shall desire it.”<sup>2</sup> The Tea-and-glass-act was passed this year ; which moved the Pennsylvania Farmer<sup>3</sup> to write his elegant letters upon our public danger ; the first of which was dated November 5, 1767. As those letters were greatly esteemed, and had very extensive effects, ten letters by way of answer to them were published at Boston, in 1769. Much pains were taken therein to persuade us that the Farmer had given false alarms, and that our liberties were in no real danger ; and yet in the ninth letter it was said, “ The question whether the parliament can lay internal taxes could be determined best by considering the power of that body to alter or vacate charters. The parliament can annul our

<sup>1</sup>Landaff's Sermon, pp. 6, 7, 25, 26. See also Vol. I, pp. 462, 463.

<sup>2</sup>Chandler's Appeal to the public, pp. 50—54, 79.

<sup>3</sup>John Dickinson.—ED.



charters at will,<sup>1</sup> without alleging *pro causa misuser or abuser*, because the king is joined by the whole Council of the nation." And in January, 1773, Governor Hutchinson purposely drew our Assembly into a debate upon this subject; and when he closed it the 6th of March, he said, "It is essential to the being of government that power should always exist which no other power within such government can have right to withstand or control; therefore when the word *power* relates to the supreme authority of government, it must be understood *absolute* and *unlimited*." And he refused his consent to an act passed in that session, to grant the salaries of the Judges of our Superior Executive Court, because he expected that the king would pay them out of the American revenue then collecting. In June following, his letter to a member of parliament, of January 20, 1769, was published by the Assembly at Boston, wherein he said, "I never think of the measures necessary for the peace and good order of the colonies, without pain. There must be an *abridgment* of what are called English liberties." This, and other original letters, were procured and sent back by the amiable and judicious Franklin, our agent at the British Court; who, as soon as this was known there, was spurned from thence with much scorn and bitterness; an infallible evidence that what they were in pursuit of were the works of darkness; for he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest. John iii. 20, 21.

In November following, arrived large cargoes of tea, which were sent over to establish a precedent of the power of the British parliament to tax this country internally. From Philadelphia and New York it was sent back, and not suffered to be landed; and the same was earnestly tried for at Boston; but Governor Hutchinson reduced his native town

<sup>1</sup>Here is a power claimed by man, which, with reverence be it spoken, is what the eternal Jehovah never assumed! His infinite perfections render it impossible for him to lie, to act inconsistently, or to entice any into sin; all which have been frequently done, by men who have assumed the power to support religious teachers by tax and compulsion.

to the cruel necessity of either suffering it to be landed, and the tax thereon paid, or else of casting it into the sea ; and the latter was chosen. Now the character of those who teach God's fear by the precepts of men, is to " watch for iniquity."<sup>1</sup> And when accounts of this and other transactions arrived in March, 1774, the British ministry imagined that they had got enough of it to cover and carry their arbitrary designs. And such use was made thereof, as to procure one act of parliament to shut up the port of Boston, until their power was obeyed there ; a second to rob the people of this province of their right to choose their own Council ; a third to screen the executors of their orders from punishment, even if they committed murder in doing it ; and a fourth greatly to enlarge the province of Quebec, to establish popery therein, and to deprive its inhabitants of their right of trials by jury, and other English liberties. As these were hostile measures, Thomas Gage, the chief commander of all the British forces in America, was appointed Governor of the Massachusetts, in order to carry them into effect. He arrived at Boston May 13, where he met the Assembly the 25th, but soon prorogued them to Salem, where a few acts were passed, and then they were dissolved, never to meet again upon their former constitution. The port of Boston was shut up in June, and in August, twenty-four of the thirty-six Counsellors, appointed for us by the crown, were sworn into office ; and writs were issued for a new choice of representatives, to meet them at Salem the 5th of October. But a week before that time the Governor, by proclamation, forbade their meeting, because the people had compelled some of those Counsellors to resign their commissions, and the rest were afraid to venture out of Boston. Yet most of the representatives met, resolved themselves into a Provincial Congress, and sat at several times and places, until they dissolved on December 10 ; having taken various steps towards the internal regulation and

<sup>1</sup>Is. 29. 13, 20.—ED.

defence of the country, and proposed a new choice of delegates from the towns, to meet in February. In the mean time all these colonies considered the case of Boston as their own, and sent large contributions to its suffering inhabitants. Delegates from twelve Colonies met at Philadelphia, September 5, and sat until October 26, stated the unalienable rights of mankind, and the nature, limits and end of civil government, in a clear manner; and sent addresses to the throne, and to various parts of the empire, well calculated to expose, and, if possible, to remove the dangers that hung over our liberties. They also recommended wise measures for our internal regulation; and, in the name of their constituents, solemnly covenanted to refrain from importing any British goods, or exporting any of ours to them, after certain times set, if said oppressive acts should not then be repealed, until their repeal was effected.

In the night preceding September 1, a party of soldiers went and seized a large quantity of powder, in a public store in Cambridge, which, with some field pieces, they brought off to Boston; upon which a report flew like the wind, that Gage had sent out his troops, who were killing the people. Multitudes were alarmed hereby, and were marching in arms to relieve their friends, until this report was contradicted. And on Lord's day, February 26, 1775, a field officer, with about a hundred men, sailed from the Castle to Marblehead, and then marched nimbly to Salem, to fetch some pieces of artillery from thence; but they were defeated in their design by the vigilance of the people. After this, Colonel Gilbert collected a quantity of arms and ammunition at Freetown, and sent to the Governor for protection; who thereupon wrote to the authority of Bristol county, to make provision for two hundred soldiers there. But, before they marched, some thousands of the inhabitants assembled on April 10, seized those war stores, and dispersed that nest of enemies at Freetown. Yet after all this, and much more of like nature, we are informed, that the Mandamus Counsellors at Boston were



under such an infatuation, as to give it as their opinion, that their countrymen would not venture to fight against the king's troops; and to advise their Governor to try the experiment, by sending a body of them to destroy or bring away the stores that were collected at Concord. But though this advice was followed with great secresy, by crossing the water from Boston Common in the dead of the night, so as to get twelve miles in their way before sunrise, yet they then saw a company of the militia collected to oppose them; of whom they killed eight<sup>1</sup> men on the spot, and then marched six miles further to Concord; where they shot down two men more, before our people fired upon them.<sup>2</sup> And they not only used their endeavors to destroy some cannon and carriages, but also cast a considerable quantity of flour into the river. Hereupon the cowardly Americans drove the heroic Britons back to their ships the same day, with much terror and slaughter, although near two thousand of their best troops were employed in the affair; which will transmit the remembrance of Lexington, and the 19th of April, down to the latest posterity.

But how the inhabitants of a country of fifteen hundred miles extent, divided into thirteen colonies, very differently constituted, wherein were persons of almost all nations, sects and opinions, could unite against the arbitrary claims of the most powerful kingdom upon earth, and could persevere therein for eight tedious years, in defiance of the utmost exertions both of craft and violence, until those claims are fully given up, is matter of universal astonishment, and will be the subject of curious inquiry to future ages. To me it is past all doubt, that no other sufficient reason can be given for this unparalleled event, than the design which God has declared to us, in the passage that adorns our title page. Pride and disobedience to him had arrived to such height in

<sup>1</sup>“Seven of the men of Lexington were killed; nine wounded; a quarter part of all who stood in arms on the green.” Bancroft, Vol. VII, p. 294.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>This is a most certain fact, though it was contradicted by our enemies in London.

both countries, that we must become dreadful scourges to each other, to discover what was in our hearts, whether we would keep his commandments or not.

A second Provincial Congress met at Concord, February 1, and proceeded to further measures for the defence of our liberties ; and other colonies did the like. The Assembly at Providence, in December, had ordered the cannon to be brought up there from their fort near Newport, which were now conveyed to the camp before Boston, formed by the militia, who assembled by thousands, and filled the towns and villages, from the bay south of Boston to Mystic River on the north ; being a circle of twenty miles. On the other hand, the British Generals, Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, arrived with large reinforcements to their army at Boston. Charlestown, to the north of it, lies, as Boston does, upon a peninsula, the latter betwixt Charles and Mystic rivers. It contained above four hundred houses, many of them very elegant. June 17, the British commanders perceived that the Americans had begun to fortify a hill on the north side of Charlestown ; upon which the town was surrounded with their ships and floating batteries, and then their army landed to attack our entrenchment. Burgoyne was upon a hill in the northeast part of Boston ; and eight days after, he wrote the following account of the action to England. Says he:—

If we look to the height, Howe's corps ascending the hill in the face of entrenchments, and in a very disadvantageous ground, was much engaged ; to the left, the enemy pouring fresh troops, by thousands, over the land, and in the arm of the sea our ships and floating batteries cannonading them ; straight before us a large and noble town in one great blaze ; the church steeples, being of timber, were great pyramids of fire above the rest ; behind us, the church steeples and heights of our own camp covered with spectators of the rest of our army which was engaged ; the hills round the country covered with spectators, the enemy all in anxious suspense : the roar of cannon, mortars and musketry, the crush of churches, ships upon the stocks, and whole streets falling together in ruins, to fill the ear ; the storm of redoubts, with the objects above described, to fill the eye, and the reflection that perhaps a defeat was a final loss of the British empire in

America, to fill the mind, . . . . made the whole a picture and complication of horror and importance, beyond any thing that ever came to my lot to be witness to. . . . Yet the day ended with glory, and the success was most important, considering the ascendancy it gave the regular troops ; but the loss was uncommon in officers, for the number engaged.

Can this be believed by posterity ? Major Pitcairn, who was most forward in firing upon our people at Lexington, was now slain, with two other field officers, two of Howe's aids, seven captains, and about eight hundred men, besides near as many more who died of their wounds, while our loss was but about half that number. All this in driving the despised Americans from a redoubt they had raised in one night, under the direction of a physician<sup>1</sup> as their chief commander ; and after he fell, the British veterans did not venture to pursue our people, though it might have been done for half a mile, under the protection of their own ships and batteries. Is this their glory ? it was glorying in their shame ! And a plain account of their motives here follows. Charles Lee had been an officer under Burgoyne in the last war, and had contracted a near friendship with him, and hearing of his arrival at Boston, he sent him a letter, which Burgoyne answered from thence, July 8, and said, " The vital principle of the constitution, in which it moves and has its being, is the supremacy of the king in parliament ; a compound, indefinite, indefeasible power, coëval with the origin of the empire, and coëxtensive over all its parts." And having laid this as his foundation, he, in an artful manner, went on to compare our conduct with theirs who beheaded Charles and set up Cromwell, and that of his party, to those who expelled James and crowned William ; and then says, " These principles, depend upon it, actuate the army and fleet throughout ; and let me at the same time add, that there are few if any gentlemen among us who would have drawn their swords in the cause of slavery. . . . I know

<sup>1</sup>The Honorable Joseph Warren, of Boston, who had just before been appointed a Major General by our Provincial Congress.



Great Britain is ready to open her arms upon the first overture of accommodation. I know she is equally resolute to maintain her original rights ; and if the war proceeds, your one hundred and fifty thousand men will not be a match for her power." This was their capital argument ; which, however, failed him and his army at Saratoga two years after. Our second Continental Congress met at Philadelphia, May 10, and sent a petition to the king, wherein they assured him, that their ardent desire was, for the restoration of the former harmony between the two countries, and for its establishment upon a permanent and lasting basis ; and said, " Our breasts retain too tender a regard for the kingdom from which we derive our origin, to request such a reconciliation as might in any manner be inconsistent with her dignity and welfare." And they prayed him to direct to some mode wherein such a reconciliation might be accomplished. On September 1, this petition was delivered to Lord Dartmouth, by Governor Penn, and Mr. Arthur Lee ; to whom the minister said, " no answer would be given." Now compare this with Burgoyne's declaration. He called their claims over the colonies original rights, and the vital principle of the constitution ; which was so opposite to truth, that it is impossible for any men ever to have such a right to power over others. And instead of a readiness for accommodation, they were earnestly barring the door against it. General Gage covenanted with our friends in Boston, that if they would deliver up their arms and ammunition, they should have liberty to go out with their other effects. But when he had thus disarmed them, he violated his promise in a shameful manner ; which raised both the resentment and the contempt of the country against his party. It taught the people not to confide in their promises, and also to despise them ; as being afraid, that if our women and children were not kept there as hostages, the people would rush in and destroy or captivate their boasting army.

On the other hand, because Cromwell, with the wisdom

of the serpent, but not the innocency of the dove, made a great overturn in the nation, which yet ended in confusion and slavery, our enemies imagined that nothing better could take place here, if we revolted from their king. But how far are God's thoughts above theirs ? He raised up a man in Virginia, the oldest of our colonies, who, by the Congress, was unanimously appointed the chief commander of our armies ; and as such arrived at the camp at Cambridge, July 2. And through eight perilous campaigns he was preserved in safety and health, was enabled to unite reason and resolution, authority and mildness, until his country was delivered from the most imminent dangers, and peace restored to the nations ; and then he as readily resigned his command as he received it, and joyfully retired into a private station, followed with the universal esteem and blessings of his country ; while a demonstration is hereby held up to all the world, that prudence, uprightness, and benevolence, will procure and preserve that honor, authority and happiness, which are in vain sought for in any other way.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

REASONS WHY THE BAPTISTS JOINED IN THIS WAR.—GRACIOUS VISITATIONS IN OUR LAND.—LABORS FOR EQUAL LIBERTY.—NEW ATTEMPTS TO DIVIDE AND ENSLAVE AMERICA.—THE FOLLY THEREOF EXPOSED.—GREAT EXPLOITS PERFORMED.—TO WHICH SUCCEEDED TERRIBLE INROADS OF THE ENEMY.—YET WONDERFUL RELIEF WAS GRANTED AGAINST THEM.—THEIR AMAZING CRUELTY.—VAST UNCERTAINTY OF OUR AFFAIRS.—THE CLOSING SCENES OF THE WAR.

Since the Baptists have often been oppressed in this land, and would have suffered more than they did, had it not been for restraints from Great Britain, how came they to join in a war against her? Many have wondered at it, and some have censured them severely therefor. But they had the following reasons for their conduct. 1. Where Episcopalians have had all the power of government, they have never allowed others so much liberty as we here enjoyed. In England all are taxed to their worship, while none are admitted into civil offices but communicants in their church. In Virginia they cruelly imprisoned Baptist ministers, only for preaching the gospel to perishing souls without license from their courts, until this war compelled them to desist therefrom. Of this we had incontestible evidence. Therefore we could have no rational hopes of any real advantage in joining with them. 2. The worst treatment we here met with came from the same principles, and much of it from the same persons, as the American war did. Many proofs of this have already been given, and more are at hand if



called for. 3. The first Baptist minister in America publicly held forth, that all righteous government is founded in compact, expressed or implied; which is equally binding upon rulers and ruled; so that every officer, whether succeeding or elected, who intermeddles in any matter not fairly derived from thence, goes beyond his commission.<sup>1</sup> When therefore our countrymen adopted these principles, and founded their opposition to arbitrary claims wholly thereon, how could we avoid joining with them? For, 4. those claims appeared to us absolutely unjust, and a direct violation of the immutable rules of truth and equity; so that a concurrence with them would have brought such guilt upon our consciences, as is infinitely worse than all the frowns of men. 5. Though heavy corrections were to be expected, yet a strong hope was begotten of final deliverance to this land; the good effects whereof might hereafter return to the people who now invaded our rights. It is not pretended that our denomination were all agreed, or had equal clearness in these points; but a majority of them were, more or less, influenced thereby.<sup>2</sup>

A main ground of the hope now mentioned, was the gracious visitations granted from time to time, in various parts of this country, which bespoke a design of final deliverance, and not of destruction or slavery. Within seven years past several thousands had been hopefully converted from the errors of their ways, in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. In and after the year 1773, a powerful work prevailed in Pittsfield, Adams, Lanesborough, Hancock, and other towns

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 141, 142.

<sup>2</sup>The following extract from a letter of Dr. Rippon of London, to President Manning, written in 1784, shows that Baptists in England as well as America, favored the cause of the colonies:—

“I believe all our Baptist ministers in town except two, and most of our brethren in the country, were on the side of the Americans in the late dispute. . . . We wept when the thirsty plains drank the blood of your departed heroes, and the shout of a king was amongst us when your well fought battles were crowned with victory. And to this hour we believe that the independence of America will for a while secure the liberty of this country; but if that continent had been reduced, Britain would not long have been free.” Manning and Brown University, p. 314.—Ed.

in Berkshire county; and the like in the adjacent parts of the county of Albany, and into the State of Vermont; which raised and increased many Baptist churches there. And, to come nearer home, the second Baptist church in Middleborough was reduced very low, until a revival began in the spring of 1773, which by the fall of 1775, caused the addition of ninety members to that church, and thirty to our third church in this town. The work extended into the eastern and most uncultivated part of Freetown, where it raised a new church, and another in Dartmouth. In November, 1744, a like blessing was granted in Attleborough, which in ten months added thirty members to the First Baptist church there, and a number more to other societies. In December this revival extended into Providence, where it prevailed gloriously through the winter. Their college enjoyed a precious share of it, the good effects whereof are still experienced in distant churches. In ten months, more than a hundred persons were added to the Baptist church there, beside large additions to other churches in the town. And, though the alarms of war in the spring caused a great interruption of spiritual exercises and enjoyments, in places near the scene of action, yet the same were promoted thereby in distant places. At the time of the Bunker Hill battle, a young physician<sup>1</sup> was converted at Harvard, thirty-five miles off, who was called the next year to preach the gospel; and he is now pastor of a large Baptist church there, the members of which are chiefly the seals of his ministry. Royalston and Richmond to the northward, and Suffield to the westward, were favored with a considerable revival of religion at this time, as Pomfret, Killingly, and other towns in Connecticut, were in 1776. And while the defence of the civil rights of America appeared a matter of great importance, our religious liberties were by no means to be neglected; and the contest concerning each kept a pretty even pace through the war.

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah Parker.—ED.

Viewing the Continental Congress as our highest civil resort, the Warren Association, at their meeting at Medfield, September 13, 1774, agreed to send their agent to Philadelphia, there to follow the best advice he could obtain, to procure some influence from thence in their favor.<sup>1</sup> A Convention of the county of Suffolk, at this time the head county of our province, gave countenance to this procedure; for their seventeenth resolve says, "This county, confiding in the wisdom and integrity of the Continental Congress, now sitting at Philadelphia, will pay all due respect and submission to such measures as may be recommended by them to the colonies, for the restoration and establishment of our just rights, civil and religious."<sup>2</sup> These resolves were carried by said agent to that city; where he met with an Association of

<sup>1</sup>"September 7,[1774.] Went over to Providence to Commencement. Met with Mr. Gano of New York, and Mr. Wm. Van Horne of South Hampton, in Pennsylvania. They with Messrs. Manning and Hezekiah Smith all were in earnest for me to go to the Association and also to the Congress at Philadelphia, and represented that now was the most likely time to obtain our religious liberty that we had ever known. I had many objections against it, but when I awoke next morning, the religious liberties of three colonies or more, appeared so weighty to my mind that, if I might do anything for their relief, I was made willing to do it, and leave my private concerns to him that orders all things."

"September 14. The Association were all unanimous that I should go to Philadelphia, and contributed £6, 10, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  towards it." Backus's Manuscript Diary.

The Association gave to Mr. Backus the following certificate:

"To the Honorable Delegates of the several colonies in North America, met in a general Congress in Philadelphia:

"HONORABLE GENTLEMEN: As the Antipædobaptist churches in New England are most heartily concerned for the preservation and defence of the rights and privileges of this country, and are deeply affected by the encroachments upon the same, which have lately been made by the British parliament, and are willing to unite with our dear countrymen, vigorously to pursue every prudent measure for relief, so we would beg leave to say that, as a distinct denomination of Protestants, we conceive that we have an equal claim to charter-rights with the rest of our fellow-subjects; and yet have long been denied the free and full enjoyment of those rights, as to the support of religious worship. Therefore we, the elders and brethren of twenty Baptist churches met in Association at Medfield, twenty miles from Boston, September 14, 1744, have unanimously chosen and sent unto you the reverend and beloved Mr. Isaac Backus as our agent, to lay our case, in these respects, before you, or otherwise to use all the prudent means he can for our relief.

JOHN GANO, Moderator,

HEZEKIAH SMITH, Clerk.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>The Congress gave their special approbation of these resolves.



Baptist churches, from several adjacent colonies who elected a large Committee to assist in the affair, and by their request a conference was procured in the evening of October 14, with the Honorable Delegates from our Province to Congress, in the presence of several more of their members, and other gentlemen. It was opened by reading a brief memorial of our chief grievances in the Massachusetts, on religious accounts,<sup>1</sup> which our Delegates endeavored to answer; first by denying that we had any cause for such complaints, and then by attempting to cast all the blame thereof upon the executive department, and asserting that our Legislature were entirely clear of it; but plain facts, especially in the Ashfield affair, confuted both of these pleas; and the conference was closed with a promise from said Delegates of the exertion of their influence in our favor.<sup>2</sup> But as some in

<sup>1</sup>This memorial was read by President Manning. It claimed liberty of conscience for the Baptists in Massachusetts Bay, both as a natural and as a charter right, and showed how this right had been violated by various enactments of the General Assembly, and especially in the cases of Sturbridge and Ashfield. It closed as follows :—

“It may now be asked, *What is the liberty desired?* The answer is: As the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, and religion is a concern between God and the soul, with which no human authority can intermeddle, consistently with the principles of Christianity, and according to the dictates of Protestantism, we claim and expect the liberty of worshipping God according to our consciences, not being obliged to support a ministry we cannot attend, whilst we demean ourselves as faithful subjects. These we have an undoubted right to, as men, as Christians, and by charter as inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay.”

This memorial, in full, is in the *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 204—210.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>“The delegates from Massachusetts used all their arts to represent that we complained without reason. John Adams made a long speech and Samuel Adams another; both of whom said, ‘There is, indeed, an ecclesiastical establishment in our province; but a very slender one, hardly to be called an establishment.’ When they would permit, we brought up facts, which they tried to explain away, but could not. Then they shifted their plea, and asserted that our General Court was clear of blame, and had always been ready to hear our complaints, and to grant all reasonable help, whatever might have been done by executive officers; and S. Adams and R. T. Paine spent near an hour more on this plea. When they stopped, I told them I was very sorry to have any accusations to bring against the government which I belonged to, and which I would gladly serve to the utmost of my power, but I must say that facts proved the contrary to their plea; and gave a short account of our Legislature’s treatment of Ashfield, which was very puzzling to them. In their plea, S. Adams tried to represent that *regular* Baptists were quite easy among us; and

Philadelphia made an attempt to turn these things against the general union of the colonies, in the defence of our civil rights, a report was industriously spread in New England, before the Baptist agent got home, that he had been to Philadelphia on purpose to break that union.<sup>1</sup> And while he was gone, the first parish in his town voted to tax all the Baptists therein to their minister, because they refused to give them any more certificates. He therefore soon met the Baptist committee at Boston, by whose advice a plain memorial of their grievances and desires was laid before our Provincial Congress;<sup>2</sup> to which the following answer was returned.

In Provincial Congress, Cambridge, December 9, 1774.

On reading the memorial of the Reverend Isaac Backus, agent to the Baptist churches in this government :

Resolved, That the establishment of civil and religious liberty, to each denomination in the province, is the sincere wish of this Congress. But being by no means vested with powers of civil government, whereby they

more than once insinuated that these complaints came from enthusiasts who made it a merit to suffer persecution; and also that enemies had a hand therein. Paine said, there was nothing of conscience in the matter; it was only a contending about paying a little money; and also that we would not be neighborly and let them know who we were, which was all they wanted, and they would readily exempt us.

“In answer, I told them they might call it enthusiasm or what they pleased; but I freely own, before all these gentlemen, that it is absolutely a point of conscience with me; for I cannot give in the certificates they require without implicitly acknowledging that power in man which I believe belongs only to God. This shocked them; and Cushing said: ‘*It quite altered the case*; for if it were a point of conscience, he had nothing to say to that.’ And the conference of about four hours continuance, closed with their promising to do what they could for our relief; though to deter us from thinking of their coming upon equal footing with us as to religion, John Adams at one time said, we might as well expect a change in the solar system, as to expect they would give up their establishment.” Backus’s Manuscripts. See a more extended sketch of this controversy, with accounts of it by Dr. Stiles and John Adams, in the *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 203—215, 349—351. See also *Works of John Adams*, Vol. II, pp. 397—399; Manning and Brown University, pp. 237—239;—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>See *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 214, 215.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>This memorial pleaded the cause of the Baptists by the arguments that were used at that time against British oppression; showed that to support the ministry by taxes collected by force was unscriptural; explained the reasons of the appeal to the Continental Congress, and recited the oppressions in Ashfield, Montague, Haverhill, Gorham, Warwick and Chelmsford. It is given entire in the *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 215—221.—Ed.

can redress the grievances of any person whatever, they therefore recommend to the Baptist churches, that when a General Assembly shall be convened in this colony, they lay the real grievances of said churches before the same, when and where their petition will most certainly meet with all that attention due to the memorial of a denomination of Christians so well disposed to the public weal of their country.

By order of the Congress,

JOHN HANCOCK, President.

A true extract from the minutes.

BENJAMIN LINCOLN, Secretary.

Our former charter provided, that when the province should happen to be destitute of any Governor or Lieutenant Governor, the Council and Representatives should have the whole legislative power therein. Therefore, by the advice of the Continental Congress, such an Assembly was convened at Watertown, July 19, 1775; to whom, in September, the Warren Association presented a memorial, wherein, after mentioning the above advice, they say:—

Our real grievances are, that we, as well as our fathers, have, from time to time, been taxed on religious accounts where we were not represented; and when we have sued for our rights, our causes have been tried by interested judges. That the Representatives in former Assemblies, as well as the present, were elected by virtue only of civil and worldly qualifications, is a truth so evident, that we presume it need not be proved to this Assembly; and for a civil Legislature to impose religious taxes, is, we conceive, a power which their constituents never had to give; and is therefore going entirely out of their jurisdiction. . . . Under the legal dispensation, where God himself prescribed the exact proportion of what the people were to give, yet none but persons of the worst characters ever attempted to *take it by force*. I Sam. ii. 12, 16; Mic. iii. 5—9. How daring then, must it be for any to do it for Christ's ministers, who says, *My kingdom is not of this world!* . . . We beseech this honorable Assembly to take these matters into their wise and serious consideration, before him who has said, With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. Is not all America now appealing to heaven against the injustice of being taxed where we are not represented, and against being judged by men who are interested in getting away our money? And will heaven approve of your *doing the same thing* to your fellow servants? No, surely. . . . We have no desire of representing this government as the worst of any who have imposed religious taxes; we fully believe the contrary. Yet, as we are persuaded that an entire freedom from being taxed by civil rulers



to religious worship, is not a mere favor, from any man or men in the world, but a right and property granted us by God, who commands us to stand fast in it, we have not only the same reason to refuse an acknowledgment of such a taxing power here, as America has the above-said power, but also, according to our present light, we should wrong our consciences in allowing that power to men, which we believe belongs only to God.

This memorial was read in the Assembly, and was ordered to lie a week on the table, and was then read again, and debated upon, and was referred to a committee, upon the receipt of whose report it was read a third time, and liberty granted to bring in a bill in our favor; and such a bill was received and read once, and a time set for a second reading. But then other business was crowded in, and nothing more done upon it.<sup>1</sup> Such is the disposition of mankind.

As the British ministry were deceived, and entirely disappointed in their first scheme, a new one was invented, in the close of 1775; which was, by acts of parliament, to declare all these colonies to be in a state of rebellion, and out of the king's protection; to hire a large army from Germany, to add terror to the roarings of the British lion; and then to appoint commissioners to proclaim pardon and peace to any colony or place that should submit to their power, and promise to raise as much money among themselves as the Court of Britain should judge to be their proportion, towards the support and defence of government; their peace to last as long as this was done. And in order to man the British ships, and to make all afraid of their power, their commanders were ordered to enter the names of as many of the captives whom they should take as they thought proper, among the list of their hands on board, so as to compel them to fight against their own country, and to be punished as deserters, if they should attempt to make their escape. And had not

<sup>1</sup>A full account of the action of the Assembly upon this memorial, is given in the *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 226—228. See also in the same work, pp. 229—231, a letter sent by the Warren Association to all the Baptist churches on the continent, “stating the true nature and importance of religious liberty,” and proposing a general meeting of delegates from all the societies to consult upon the means by which this liberty might be secured.—ED.

the Lord been on our side, when men thus rose up against us, how soon would they have swallowed us up ! But when, in his wise dispensations, he had given them all the advantages that could well be conceived of, how easily did he turn their counsels into foolishness ? For when the British party in Boston came to look out in the morning of March 13, 1776, behold ! two stately forts appeared on the top of two hills in Dorchester, capable of commanding both the town and the ships in the harbor. Burgoyne's letter to England the June before informs us, that his party had laid a plan to take possession of those hills, which was to have been executed the 18th of that month ; but was prevented by the Bunker Hill battle the preceding day. And as the only land passage on to those heights was across an open marsh, within half a mile of their guards on Boston Neck, and as they had a multitude of their friends scattered through the country, was it possible for several hundred tons weight of materials to be prepared before, and then to be carted some miles on to those hills, and two forts to be erected there in one night, by the undisciplined Americans, and the sagacious Britons know nothing about it ? Yet such was the event ; and let them deny it if they can. Not only so, but while they were preparing to go over and attack those forts, the winds and waves were put into such a commotion, as finally prevented the attempt. And on March 17, the British army, with a large number of our inimical countrymen, fled from Boston ; and soon sailed to Nova Scotia or to Britain. Indeed, some of their men-of-war were left in Nantasket Road, out of the reach of our cannon ; yet on May 17, a small armed vessel took a large store-ship of theirs in the bay, which was conveyed into Boston in their sight, and they had not power to prevent it, having on board a thousand stands of arms, fifteen hundred whole barrels of powder, and a large quantity of other necessary supplies for our army. And on June 14, their ships were compelled to quit the lower harbor, by the firing of some cannon which our people had

conveyed down the night before ; whereby that port was again opened, which was cruelly shut up two years before. And about four hundred and fifty of their troops were captivated by our cruisers about this time ; and a vast quantity of their goods of all kinds were taken and brought into our country.

Not aware of such events, the next object of British policy was, to appoint such men to execute their new plan as should be able to divide the colonies, by drawing some part of them to accept of their pardons. And as Lord George Howe, who was slain near Ticonderoga, July 6, 1758, was so much beloved here, that the Massachusetts were at the expense of erecting a monument for him in Westminster Abbey, who could be so likely to gain upon our people as his two brothers? William was already appointed Governor of this province and Chief General of their armies ; and Richard, successor in title to George, and an intimate friend to Dr. Franklin, was now made Chief Admiral of their fleet ; and they were made joint commissioners to proclaim pardon to all who would accept of it on the above terms. And as an army of thirty-five thousand men was to be at their command, who would not be glad to receive their pardon and protection, rather than to be a mark for their resentment? But alas! the winds and waves were so contrary, that the two brothers could not meet to send out their proclamations, until July 12, eight days after the Congress, by the consent of the people in the thirteen colonies, had declared them to be FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES. However, from on board their ships near New York, they sent forth their proclamations, which our people readily propagated through all these States. And, with a packet to Congress, Lord Howe sent a letter to his friend Franklin, a member of it, wherein he says :—

Retaining all the earnestness I ever expressed to see our differences accommodated, I shall conceive, if I meet with the dispositions in the colonies which I was once taught to expect, the most flattering hopes of prov-



ing serviceable, in the objects of the king's paternal solicitude, by promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union with the colonies. But if the deep-rooted prejudices of America, and the necessity of preventing her trade from passing into foreign channels, must keep us still a divided people, I shall, from every private as well as public motive, most heartily lament that it is not the moment wherein those great objects of my ambition are to be attained.

Franklin returned an answer from Philadelphia, July 30, wherein he says:—

The official dispatches to which you refer me, contain nothing more than we had seen in the act of parliament, viz., offers of pardon upon submission; which I am sorry to find, as it must give your Lordship pain to be sent so far on so hopeless a business. Directing pardons to be offered to the colonies, who are the very parties injured, expresses indeed that opinion of our ignorance, baseness and insensibility, which your uninformed and proud nation has long been pleased to entertain of us; but it can have no other effect than that of increasing our resentment. It is impossible we should think of submission to a government that has, with the most wanton barbarity and cruelty, burnt our defenceless towns, in the midst of winter; excited the savages to massacre peaceful farmers, and our slaves to murder their masters; and is even now bringing foreign mercenaries to deluge our settlements with blood.<sup>1</sup> . . . . Long did I endeavor, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking that fine and noble china vase, the British empire; for I knew, that being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their shares of the strength and value that existed in the whole; and that a perfect reunion of these parts could scarce ever be hoped for. . . . The well founded esteem, and, permit me to say, affection, which I shall always have for your Lordship, make it painful for me to see you engaged in conducting a war, the great ground of which, as described in your letter, is the necessity of preventing the American trade from passing into foreign channels. To me it seems that neither the obtaining or retaining any trade, how valuable soever, is an object for which men may

<sup>1</sup>October 17, 1775, the enemy burnt four hundred and seventeen buildings in the town of Falmouth in Casco Bay. In the evening of the 7th of that month, their ships fired upon the town of Bristol, near Swanzy; which caused the death of Mr. John Burt, their minister, and some others. Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, retired on board an armed ship, and drew off all the slaves and others that he could; and, after much other mischief, they burnt the town of Norfolk on January 1, 1776; in which cruel action, besides the unnatural nature of it, the whole loss to the inhabitants was computed at above three hundred thousand pounds. And a man was taken up, upon his way to the Ohio Indians, with a Colonel's commission from General Gage, to command all the savages and others that he could raise in the wilderness against us.

justly spill each other's blood ; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce, are the goodness and cheapness of commodities ; and that the profits of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it, and holding it by fleets and armies.

The real nature of the controversy is here stated in a fair and elegant manner ; and its whole progress verifies the truth of the word which says, Only by pride cometh contention ; and the love of money is the root of all evil. And can a clearer demonstration thereof be given, than for the inhabitants of one country to claim a right to be lawgivers and judges for others three thousand miles off, so as to dispose of their persons and property without their consent ? A darling practice of our age, especially among high politicians, is to set up reason above divine revelation ; but how will their rules suit in this case ? One of their noted authors expressly denies that God had a right to command Abraham to sacrifice his son, with an intent to have it obeyed, and says, " The command might be given in order to convince Abraham, that even his honesty and integrity, when not under the direction of his understanding, might mislead him in the conducting of his actions." The reason given for thus setting up an inward rule above the written word, is this : says he, " It was right and fit, in the nature of the thing, that Abraham should guard and protect the life of Isaac ; which obligation, as it is founded in nature, so it is independent of, and antecedent to, any divine command ; yea, it is antecedent to the consideration of a deity, because it must and would be the same, if there were no such thing as a deity.<sup>1</sup> Yet when he comes to the question, " From whence does evil proceed ?" he says, " The difficulty in this case may not arise from the state of things, but from the weakness of our understandings, and the shortness of our knowledge, which render us incapable of seeing through and to the end of them."<sup>2</sup> Very true ; why then do these

<sup>1</sup>Chubb's Tracts, printed in London, 1754, Vol. II, pp. 3, 12. [Chubb's Treatises, XIX, pp. 240—246.]

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 22. [Chubb's Treatises, XX, p. 254.]

weak and dark minds refuse entire submission and ready obedience to him whose understanding is infinite? Had any due regard been paid to his authority in our mother island, we should never have heard of paternal solicitude, in invading the unalienable rights of her children; nor of pardons brought upon the points of bayonets! At the same time we have just cause to confess, that all our sufferings were less than our iniquities deserved, and that we were far from giving God all the glory of our support and deliverance, as we ought to have done. To give a particular history of this war is out of my province, though a concise view of the chief events of it comes into my plan. Yet, wanting time and means for it, my narrative must necessarily be incomplete.

As Canada had long been a dreadful scourge to New England, and the repeating of those bloody tragedies was intended by our enemies, amazing exertions were made to prevent it, and to unite that country with ours. Most of its inhabitants desired it, which was a great inducement to this attempt. Therefore the Colonels Ethan Allen and Seth Warner, encouraged thereto by the authority of Connecticut, surprised and took the strong fortresses of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, May 10, 1775, without the loss of a man on either side; whereby above two hundred pieces of cannon, two vessels on Lake Champlain, and a large quantity of other stores fell into our hands. All this was done by three hundred and thirty men, chiefly from the State of Vermont. An army followed under General Montgomery, and after a close siege took St. Johns, at the farther end of said lake, and obtained the city of Montreal, November 13; previous whereto, Allen was taken and carried to Europe. In September Colonel Arnold set off from Cambridge with eleven hundred men, and marched to Newburyport, from whence they sailed into Kennebeck River, and went up to its head. And though near a third part of them then turned back, yet the remainder went forward, through a great and terrible



wilderness, over rivers, hills and mountains, where they saw not the habitation of any human person for thirty-one days, until they arrived among the Canadians on November 3, by whom they were kindly treated, And the falling snows, severe coldness of the air, and other unspeakable difficulties in that northern region, did not hinder their march forward, nor the junction of Montgomery's forces with them in December before Quebec, the capital of Canada. These were some of the doings of a people, whom British policy, or rather folly, had declared to be cowards and paltrons. Allen and Arnold sprung from the despised Rhode Islanders. On the other hand, as General Clinton had sailed from Boston with some forces, General Lee set off by land, and headed him at New York, in Virginia, and in North and South Carolina. At length, being reinforced from Britain in June, by Admiral Parker and Lord Cornwallis, a furious attack was made upon the fort on Sullivan's Island, near Charleston ; but they were defeated, with great damages in their shipping, as well as loss of their men ; and the remainder returned and joined their main body near New York. General Washington with our main army was there, and had erected various fortifications in that city, and upon Long Island. And through the land many gloried in what the Americans had done, and evidently treated their enemies with contempt. But how vain did their glorying soon appear ?

Our army met with a terrible defeat on Long Island, August 28 ; were forced to evacuate the city of New York, September 13 ; fought on a retreat at the White Plains ; Fort Washington was given up November 16 ; General Lee was taken December 13 ; and General Washington with the small remnant of our army retreated beyond the Delaware. Ravishing of women and plundering of houses, by an enraged enemy, was seen through all the beautiful country of New Jersey, and their cantonments were extended into the towns of Trenton, Bordentown and Burlington, on the Delaware ; the latter within twenty miles of Philadelphia, over

to which a few freezing nights might give them an easy passage. If we turn our eyes to the north, we behold General Montgomery slain, December 31, in attempting to storm Quebec. In the spring our army was forced to make a hasty retreat from thence, being most cruelly harassed by the enemy, and greatly distressed at the same time with the small pox. And though a costly fleet to oppose them was formed on Lake Champlain, yet it was lost on October 12. And on December 8, the enemy, with a powerful force, took possession of Rhode Island, near the heart of New England. Our first army enlisted for eight months, the second for a year, which was now expiring, and the soldiers were daily returning home. Our paper money had been kept in good credit, until large additional sums were made in September, which lessened its value; and such vast quantities of goods were taken by our cruisers, and sold at public auction, that sugars rose from five dollars and a third per hundred to ten dollars in three months, and the like in other goods. Thus our prosperity seemed likely to destroy us, for if our public credit failed, confusion and slavery appeared the unavoidable consequence. And, to accomplish this, if possible, the enemy counterfeited our paper currency at New York, and in a clandestine manner dispersed large quantities of it through the country. Every earthly help failed us; but as our appeal had been to heaven against oppressors, many cries now undoubtedly ascended there, saying Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man. And what an answer thereto was returned!

While the enemy were expecting in a few days to march in triumph to Philadelphia, on December 26, General Washington takes near a thousand of them, and carries them there as captives. And though a large reinforcement of the enemy marched up to Trenton, and expected to have our General and his forces in the morning, yet the next news they hear of him is at Princeton, a dozen miles off, where he captivates another party of their troops, and is soon gone

out of their way, January 2, 1777. These things terrified the enemy in such a manner as to call in and confine them at Brunswick, within sight of their shipping, until spring, when they returned to New York. Hard attempts indeed were made by some, to persuade the world that bribery moved the British General thus to act. As if men who could scarcely reward their friends for necessary services, could outbid their enemies, who had the wealth of both the Indies at command! Such violence will courtiers offer to reason, rather than to confess that, wherein they deal proudly, God is above them, and easily turns their counsels into foolishness. For though their main army sailed into Chesapeake Bay, and marched from thence to Philadelphia in September, and kept it one winter, yet they got no real advantage thereby. Rather, by dividing their forces, they prepared the way for their own confusion. Burgoyne had acquired a large share of military skill and fame, in former wars in Europe and in the East Indies; and thirteen thousand troops were assigned him, besides savage auxiliaries, to invade our country from Canada. Ticonderoga was thought by many to be almost impregnable, and yet it was deserted by our army, July 5, before it was fully invested by the enemy, who pursued and harassed our people most terribly. And if the strongest fortress in the land was thus given up, only upon seeing the manner of the enemy's approach, how easily might they subdue an open country, and march where they pleased! Where is the power now that can defend us! A great consternation spread through the country; and to pursue this advantage with the utmost speed, moved Burgoyne to take such methods as effectually defeated his designs. Had he returned a little, and taken the advantage of a water passage over Lake George, he might have reached Fort Edward much sooner than he did. But fearing an abatement of the ardor of his troops, and of the consternation of the Americans, he pursued them in a way attended with great natural impediments, which were much augmented by fallen



trees and other obstacles then thrown in their way. So that by the time he sent out a party towards Bennington, with a haughty proclamation to intimidate our countrymen, their spirits were revived, and on August 16, they faced the enemy's encampment, and forced their lines with undaunted resolution. His western detachment, under St. Leger, was also defeated. And the chief commanders in that department being removed, and others appointed, in whom our people had confidence, they were all alive in the defence of our country. Ticonderoga was recovered, and every resource and way of escape was cut off; so that the haughty General and his army had no way left but to surrender themselves and their weapons into the hands of the people they had greatly abused and despised. This was on October 17. All Europe was astonished at this event; and one of their most powerful princes soon made the proposal, which was accomplished on February 6, 1778, of coming into an alliance with the United States of America. Hereby a great turn was made in our affairs, and a door was opened for our deliverance, though not without many other trying scenes.

As the invaders of our rights called us rebels, it was very difficult settling a cartel for the exchange of prisoners; and when that was agreed upon, new difficulties about it soon arose. When they had taken General Lee, who had been one of their officers, he was not dealt with as our country officers in their hands were; which moved the Congress to order some retaliation upon their officers in our hands, which caused reciprocal complaints, and many terrible actions on both sides. On January 1, 1777, two hundred of our countrymen, who had been prisoners at New York, were brought to Milford to be exchanged; but they had been so cruelly used, that a very large part of them died before their friends could have notice of it, so as to afford them any relief. Two young men from Middleborough, and a pious member of a Baptist church in Attleborough, died there in that manner. And during the war their prison-ships at New York destroyed

many thousands of our people, in a much more cruel manner than common murder. Therefore when there was a want of union and vigor in the defence of our country at any time, new attempts of the enemy against us never failed of supplying that want. They plainly acted like thieves and robbers in all parts of the land. In the morning of May 25, 1778, a party of them came up to Warren, and burned their meeting-house and minister's house, with some others; plundered their goods, and carried off several of the inhabitants that were not in arms, one of whom was the pastor of the Baptist church there, who was confined for some time in a prison-ship at Newport. On their return they burned a number of houses in Bristol, among which was their Episcopal church. But I must not enlarge upon this subject. Other commissioners were now sent over, with new offers of pardon, and also of an enlargement of our privileges, if we would submit to the British government. Copies thereof were sent to the Congress, and to the Governors of the several States. In answer to those sent to Governor Trumbull, he well said:—

There was a day when even this step, from our then acknowledged parent State, might have been accepted with joy and gratitude; but that day, Sir, is past irrecoverably. The repeated rejection of our sincere and sufficiently humble petitions; the commencement of hostilities; the inhumanity which has marked the prosecution of the war on your part in its several stages; the insolence which displays itself on every petty advantage; the cruelties which have been exercised on those unhappy men, whom the fortune of war has thrown into your hands; all these are insuperable bars to the very idea of concluding a peace with Great Britain, on any other conditions than the most absolute, perfect independence.

However, the vast uncertainty of human affairs must yet be largely experienced, before such a peace could be obtained.

General Howe was recalled, and Clinton took his place as chief commander; and he evacuated Philadelphia, after they had possessed it near nine months, and marched his army across the lower part of New Jersey, where General Wash-

ington gave them battle, near Monmouth Court House, June 28; when many were slain on both sides, and the excessive heat of the air cut off many more. No sooner had the British troops arrived at New York, than a powerful French fleet appeared upon the coasts, and came before that place. British fears and American hopes were raised hereby; which alternately were as changeable as the winds. The French made no attempt upon New York; but their speedy arrival at Rhode Island caused considerable destruction of the British shipping, and raised the hopes of our people of seeing that place delivered. Many thousands were collected for that purpose, who, under the command of General Sullivan, landed upon the island, August, 9. But the appearance of the British fleet drew that of France out of the harbor the same day; and a terrible storm soon dispersed and shattered both fleets, so as to prevent any general engagement, or a deliverance to Rhode Island. In December, the capital of Georgia was taken by a party of the British troops. In 1779, various attempts were made to open a passage up the North River; but finding it impracticable, a strong party was sent to New Haven, who slew a number of the inhabitants, and plundered the town; and then went and burned the beautiful towns of Fairfield and Norwalk. Their malignity was hereby further discovered; but it could not draw the sagacious Washington from the mountains, while he saw a powerful fleet and army below him. From Georgia a party of their troops marched to the gates of Charleston; but the arrival of a French fleet on the coasts turned them back to Savannah; which place our friends attempted to take by storm on October 9, but without success. Thus the hopes of help from our allies were a second time disappointed. The produce of the field was also so much cut short last year, that bread was the scarcest the beginning of this that we had ever known. And to have the judgment of famine added to that of the sword, would be terrible indeed. But infinite goodness now gave us an earlier harvest than we



had ever seen, and in a few months our scarcity was turned into plenty. And on October 24, the enemy went off from Rhode Island, which was a great relief to this part of the country.

Having made sufficient trial of these northern hills, they flattered themselves with much greater advantages in the southern plains of America. And for a while it seemed as if in that way they would have carried all before them. A large force sailed from New York in December, and though they had a tempestuous passage, yet after some repairs at Georgia, they came and besieged the capital of South Carolina; which was compelled to yield to them May 12, 1780. The country then lay open to their ravages; and on August 16, General Gates, who had gained great fame in the north, was entirely defeated in those southern regions. And though a French fleet and army arrived at Rhode Island July 10, yet none could then tell whether we should obtain any solid benefit thereby. Our public credit was sinking daily, even so that scarce any recruits for our army could be obtained, but upon private, personal security. And in November the officers constrained the Congress to promise them half-pay during life, to prevent their deserting the public service of their country. In June our currency had depreciated so far, that seventy-five paper dollars were readily given for one of silver. By orders from Congress, the New England States then came into such measures as kept it at a stay until February, 1781; when the pouring in vast quantities of it from the southward gave it such a rapid turn, that it ran entirely down in May, so as to stop passing. Before this, General Greene, on March 14, lost a large number of men in the battle of Guilford Court House, in North Carolina; from whence Lord Cornwallis marched with a powerful army into Virginia, where he spread much terror, and laid waste the country; while the credit of Congress was sunk so low, that they were scarcely able to send the least supply to General Greene. Yet, to the astonishment of our enemies, he was

made instrumental of an entire recovery of South Carolina and Georgia. A loan of money from France revived our public credit; their troops marched through the land, from Rhode Island to Virginia; the winds and seas, with the hearts of the people, all concurred together to compel another experienced British General, with a large and powerful army, to yield themselves as prisoners to the despised and much injured Americans, October 19, 1781. The effect of which was, that on November 30, 1782, the British Court fully gave up their claims to these thirteen United States; which treaty was to take place as soon as peace was settled with France and the other powers concerned. Preliminaries for it were signed January 20, and the peace was settled in September, 1783. Though before we say more upon it, we must take a further look at things among ourselves.





## CHAPTER XXV.

A NEW CONSTITUTION FRAMED, BUT NOT ACCEPTED.—PEPPERELL RIOT.  
—GOVERNMENT AND LIBERTY DESCRIBED.—BUT MUCH OPPOSED.—OUR  
PRESENT CONSTITUTION BROUGHT IN.—BAPTIST TESTIMONIES REJECTED.  
—WHAT THEIR FAITH AND ORDER IS.—A CHARGE TO EMBRACE FURTHER  
LIGHT AS IT OPENS.

Our Assembly for 1777 were empowered to frame a new constitution of government, which was to be established or rejected by the next Assembly. This was done in the winter after, but without any Bill of Rights ; and an article was inserted therein to adopt their old ecclesiastical laws ; which caused the Baptist agent and committee to meet at Boston, February 21, 1778, and to draw up an address<sup>1</sup> to our next Assembly against those laws, with a prayer that it might be fixed as a fundamental principle of our government, “ that ministers shall be supported only by Christ’s authority, and not at all by assessment and secular force ; which impartial liberty has long been claimed and enjoyed by the town of Boston.” A hundred copies of it were printed and dispersed, and a large number from various denominations subscribed it. This gave such an alarm, that an earnest warn-

<sup>1</sup>We learn from his Diary that this address was written by Mr. Backus himself. Another paper from the same pen, in the same cause, had just preceded it. In several towns in the State, particularly in Medfield, ministerial rates had been recently collected by distraint from Baptists. This led Mr. Backus to prepare an “ Address to the people of New England,” rehearsing the pleas for liberty of conscience. It was read at the meeting of the Warren Association in 1777, and published with their Minutes as a circular to the churches.—ED.

ing was given to our rulers, in the Election Sermon at Boston, May 27, against making any alteration in their established modes and usages in religion ; when it was said, "Let the restraints of religion once be broken down, as they infallibly would be by leaving the subject of public worship to the humors of the multitude, and we might well defy all human wisdom and power to support and preserve order and government in the State."<sup>1</sup> However, that constitution was set aside ; and his party in the country, soon after, gave a remarkable discovery of what their ideas were about religion and good order.

For two young Baptist ministers were called to preach in Pepperell, near forty miles north-westward of Boston, to whom six persons offered themselves as candidates for baptism. Therefore, on June 26, they met in a field by a river side, where prayers were made, and a sermon begun, when the chief officers of the town, with many followers, came and interrupted their worship. The owner of the field warned them to depart out of it, if they would not be peaceable ; but they refused to go. One of the Baptist ministers desired them to act like men, if they would not like Christians ; and reminded them of the liberty of conscience which is generally allowed, and even by the powers we were at war with ; and began to open the divine warrant therefor ; upon which an officer said, "Don't quote Scripture here !" Another of them, who was a communicant in their church, cast the odious name, *Tory*, upon one of those candidates for baptism. And he no sooner attempted to discover the injustice thereof, than the officer said, " Hold your tongue, or I'll beat your teeth down your throat !" And a dog was carried into the river and plunged, in evident contempt of our sentiments. A gentleman of the town then invited the Baptists to go and hold their meeting at his house, which was near another river. They accepted of it, and so went through with their worship. At the close of which a man

<sup>1</sup>Payson's Sermon, p. 20.

was hired with a bowl of liquor to go into the river, and dip another two or three times over; where also two or three dogs more were plunged. After which three officers of the town came into the house where the Baptist ministers were, and advised them immediately to depart out of that town for their own safety. Being asked whether their lives would be in danger if they did not depart, no answer was returned. But seeing their temper, the Baptists agreed to disperse, and to meet at a distant place of water; which was done, and those six persons were decently baptized, though further abuse was offered at the close of it. By direction of the Warren Association, an account of these things was published in the Independent Chronicle of October 15;<sup>1</sup> which others laid before the Grand Jury of the county of Middlesex. But they were prevailed with to suspend the matter, until the town should vindicate themselves. This they attempted in the Chronicle of November 12. It mainly turned upon disputing the names of actions, and about the persons who performed them. The Baptist account charged the hiring of a person to go into the water upon an officer, which was said to be by way of mockery. But say the town:—

The misrepresentation of this affair, and indeed a most unpardonable one it is, appears from considering, that the conduct of said Bynton and Lawrence was altogether from the instigation of a youngster, who promised Bynton a bowl of liquor on complying with his proposal; and this was done inconsiderately, and not meant as a piece of religious mockery. The officers of the town had no concern in that affair. .... They were quite opposite, and particular care was taken by the officers of the town to prevent riotous behavior, and to maintain peace and good order. That we did, as a town, pay particular attention to the conduct of those dangerous persons, is a fact we do not wish to conceal.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This account was written by Mr. Backus, and published over his signature, as agent of the Baptist churches. It is a detailed account of the disgraceful transactions, giving the names of many concerned in them. By advice of the Warren Association, Mr. Backus had visited the town and obtained exact information of the facts. —ED.

<sup>2</sup>This vindication of the town of Pepperell was “signed by order of said town; Nehemiah Hobart, Town Clerk.” While it charged the article of Mr. Backus with



Now the dangerous person, who then carried into Pepperell the dangerous practice of quoting Scripture to defend liberty of conscience, and of burying in baptism, was Isaiah Parker, pastor of the Baptist church in Harvard, who from that day to this is allowed by authority to be a regular minister of Jesus Christ, though he is not a State minister. Another event, still more dangerous to their way, was as follows :—

By the unanimous voice of the Warren Association of September 8, a pamphlet was published, which says :—

As the affairs of government and liberty are the greatest points of controversy now in the world, it certainly is of great importance that our ideas be clear and just concerning them. Permit us [me] therefore to offer a few thoughts upon a familiar metaphor, which the Holy Ghost has used to illustrate their true nature. In Amos v. 24, he says, Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. From whence we may observe ; 1. That judgment and righteousness are essential to freedom. When we would represent any thing as quite free, we say it is as free as water. And not only the flow of mercy and grace from God to men, but also its effects in them, in producing obedience unto him, are often compared thereto in the word of truth. John iv. 14, [and] vii. 38 ; Titus ii. 11, 12, [and] iii. 5—8. This is most certain, because, 2. Freedom is not acting at random, but by reason and rule. Those who walk after their own lusts, are clouds without water, carried about by [of] winds ; or raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame ; while the true sons of lib-

falsehood in general, it attempted to deny scarce any one of its statements in particular. Its main object was to claim that neither the officers nor the people of the town were responsible for the treatment of the Baptists, but only a few thoughtless persons.

This was not the end of this newspaper controversy. In the Independent Chronicle of December 3, was a piece from Mr. Backus, reasserting the statements of his former article, and containing a certificate from six men of Pepperell, describing the indecencies of the town meeting that was called in consequence of Mr. Backus's former article, and showing that the piece published in vindication of the town was so prepared as to be untrustworthy in itself, and not a true expression of the sense of the town. In the Boston Gazette, February 1, 1779, was a scurrilous piece, signed "Swift," which stated that Mr. Backus himself wrote the above named certificate, and induced the signers to subscribe it, promising that he would not publish it. The signers were defamed as tories, cheats and thieves, and it was more than intimated that Mr. Backus was no better. In the Gazette of February 22, Mr. Backus denied the statements with regard to the procuring of the certificate ; and in the same paper of March 8, was a second article from "Swift," in the same tone as the former.

—ED.

erty are like streams which run down in a clear and steady channel. David says, I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart. I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts. Streams and rivers must have steady channels to run in; but they that promise liberty while they despise government, are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest. II Peter ii. 10—19. 3. Though tyranny and licentiousness often make a great noise, yet government and liberty are much stronger than they are. The former, like raging waves, dash themselves against the rocks, and die upon the shore; or like a tempest, after making sad waste and devastation, their strength is gone, and their force is over. While the latter, like a mighty stream, carry all before them, and never rest till they can get through or over all obstacles [which are] put in their way. 4. Streams and rivers are of great use, and cause a constant flow of refreshment and blessings wherever they come; so does the exercise and administration of judgment and righteousness, among all people that enjoy them. Hence, 5. The command of heaven is, Let them run down; put no obstruction in their way. No, rather be in earnest to remove every thing that hinders their free course. 6. The context plainly shews, that a main obstruction to these great blessings among the people then spoken to, was their assuming a power to govern religion, instead of being governed by it. True religion is a voluntary obedience unto God. And the great design of all ordinances and acts of worship towards him, is that thereby we may obtain pardon and cleansing, with direction and assistance to behave as we ought towards our fellow men. But instead of this, those people added their own inventions to divine institutions, and substituted their acts of devotion towards God, in the place of a righteous practice towards men; or for a cover to their contrary conduct. And they would fain have been thought very religious, although they turned judgment into wormwood, hated him that rebuked in the gate, and abhorred him who spake up-rightly.<sup>1</sup>

Infinite wisdom disposed things in such a manner, as to give a keener edge to this remonstrance than could be foreseen by man. For an extract from the last Election Sermon, and also from Chauncy against Chandler, was added to the above observations, with some remarks thereon.<sup>2</sup> At

<sup>1</sup>“Government and Liberty described, and Ecclesiastical Tyranny Exposed. By Isaac Backus, Pastor of a Church in Middleborough. ‘Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.’ Gal. v. 1.” Pp. 1, 2.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>A part of the extract from the Election Sermon is on page 220; and a part of that from Dr. Chauncy, on page 147. The treatise shows the inconsistency of these authors with each other, and Dr. Chauncy’s inconsistency with himself.—Ed.

the same time our army on Rhode Island saw such danger of being surrounded by the British fleet, that they wisely came off with all their stores, in the night after August 30. Chauncy imagined that this defeat might be turned to ministerial advantage; and therefore at his next lecture, when many of our rulers were present, he delivered a discourse from the seventh of Joshua, wherein he represented that one of the accursed things which caused that defeat, was their neglect of making a new law to help ministers about their salaries, which the depreciation of our currency had greatly lessened. This sermon was soon printed and dispersed in the country. And in the *Continental Journal* of October 8, it was highly commended, and its author also; and then it was said, "Although the General Assembly has now been sitting for some time, no motion (as I can learn) has as yet been made, or is likely to be made, for this purpose. . . . Are the clergy then to submit to this treatment? Are they as an order, and [as] the only order of men in the community, to remain subjected to injustice and fraud!" Now it was so ordered, that the above passages in the Baptist pamphlet were inserted in the *Independent Chronicle* the same day, in the same street, in Boston. By which means the same author was declaring to the world in one paper, that all religious establishments were of infinite damage to the cause of God and true religion; and in another, that the want of further exertions in that way was an accursed thing, which caused the defeat of our army. And what could be done in such a case? In the *Boston Gazette* of November 2, it was declared, that said Baptist pamphlet "exhibited only a compound of ignorance, impudence and abuse."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This was the commencement of another protracted newspaper controversy. The article of November 2, was largely a personal attack upon Mr. Backus. It was signed "Hieronymus." Similar articles with the same signature appeared in the *Gazette* December 28, January 18, 1779, February 1, and March 8. Mr. Backus replied to the first in the *Gazette* of December 14, 1778; and a Baptist writer, signing himself "Milton," vindicated Mr. Backus against "Hieronymus" in the *Independent Chronicle*, November 19, 1778, December 17, and February 25, 1779.—ED.



And their refusal to comply with ministerial demands, was declared to be a using force against them ; upon which it was said, "I cannot conceive that it is more proper to use force against ministers than for them ; yet this is the subject from which a set of men, who have occasioned more disturbance and damage to this State than would be repaired by all the money which selling them all for slaves would produce, derive [all] their importance." And the secular arm was called for to punish them. This was so far from being obtained, that the pastor of the First Baptist church in Boston was called to preach the Election Sermon there, May 26, 1779, in which the difference between church and State was well described, with the importance of keeping them entirely distinct ; and it was printed and sent through the State by order of authority.<sup>1</sup> However our opponents were far from yielding this point.

Delegates from the several towns, elected entirely for the purpose of framing a new constitution of government, met on September 1, and chose a large committee to make a draft for their consideration, and adjourned. When they met again they took in hand a Bill of Rights which was laid before them. The Third Article therein was to give civil rulers power in religious matters, which occasioned much debate ; until a Baptist member moved to have that article recommitted. The motion was concurred with, and he was elected the Chairman of a committee of seven upon that article. Five of them were great politicians, and they brought in a new draft, which, after warm debates, was passed by a majority, November 10, as it now stands in our constitution. In order to obtain this vote, it was asserted that there never was any persecution in this land ; but that what had been so called were only just punishments upon

<sup>1</sup>"A Sermon to the Honorable Council, &c., May 26, 1779. By Samuel Stillman, A. M. Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. Mark 12. 17." Backus says in his Diary, that seventy-eight out of eighty-six voted for Mr. Stillman as preacher.—ED.

disorderly persons, and disturbers of the public peace. And the Baptists were accused of sending their agent to Philadelphia in 1774, with a false memorial of grievances, in order to break the union of the colonies. Sharp debates were caused hereby for some time; but the first volume of our history was brought in and laid upon the table, which silenced the first part of those declamations, and their agent, being informed of the latter part; published said Third Article in the Chronicle of December 2, with reasons against the power claimed in the middle part of it;<sup>1</sup> and then named his accusers concerning the Philadelphia affair, and charged them with a violation of their promise made there; and challenged them to a fair hearing before any proper judges. This was so far from being granted, that a long, reviling piece, full of glaring deceit, came out in the Chronicle of February 10, 1780;<sup>2</sup> which was soon after reprinted in the Providence Gazette, where the appeal it pretended to answer was not known. It accused the Baptist members of

<sup>1</sup>The objectionable part of the Third Article of the proposed constitution, was as follows:—

“The people of this Commonwealth have a right to invest their Legislature with power to authorize and require the several towns, parishes, precincts, and other bodies politic, or religious societies, to make suitable provision, at their expense, for the institution of the public worship of God, and for the support and maintenance of public protestant teachers of piety, religion, and morality, in all cases where such provision shall not be made voluntarily. And the people of this Commonwealth have also a right to, and do invest their Legislature with authority to enjoin upon all the subjects an attendance upon the instructions of the public teachers aforesaid, at stated times and seasons, if there be any one whose instructions they can conveniently and conscientiously attend; provided, notwithstanding, that the several towns, parishes, precincts, or other bodies politic, and religious societies, shall at all times have the exclusive right of electing their public teachers, and of contracting with them for their support and maintenance. And all monies raised by the subjects to the support of the public worship, and of the public teachers aforesaid, shall, if he request it, be uniformly applied to the support of the public teacher or teachers of his own religious sect or denomination, provided there be any on whose instructions he attends; otherwise it may be paid to the teacher or teachers of the parish or precinct where the money is raised.”—ED.

<sup>2</sup>This article claimed to be written “by a member of the Convention.” Mr. Backus writes in his Diary, “An answer to my publication of December 2, was in the same paper of February 10; said to be written by Mr. S. West, of Dartmouth.”—ED.

the Convention of bitterness and rage against their ministers, especially for comparing them to the sons of Eli; and to prove that they were not worthy of that charge, the writer says, "Eli's sons were not to blame for taking that part of the offerings which the law allowed them, but for the illegal manner in which they took it." Very true; and the only cause of the bitterness and rage now discovered against the Baptists, was their refusal to countenance such an illegal and wicked manner of proceeding. An anonymous Baptist writer began some publications in the *Chronicle*, against the power of taxation claimed in the above-said Third Article, about the time that the constitution was finished. In answer to whom, a writer appeared in the *Continental Journal* of March 9, saying:—

The wicked enemies of our civil and sacred rights, are like the troubled sea, whose waters cannot rest, but being driven by furious winds are continually casting up mire and dirt. . . . There is a certain junto composed of disguised tories, British emissaries, profane and licentious deists, avaricious worldings, disaffected sectaries, and furious, blind bigots, who had much rather overturn and destroy the Commonwealth, than not have the gratification of their own humor.

And he subscribed himself "Irenæus, a member of the Convention."<sup>1</sup> The Baptist agent and committee met, April 6, and published an appeal to the people of this State, against the taxing power for religious teachers claimed in the new constitution, then sent out for their acceptance or rejection. But their opponents were so much concerned about it, that no less than three different pieces against the Baptist agent were published in the Boston papers in the month of May, to two of which the writers subscribed their names,<sup>2</sup> which had not been done before. One of them was as follows: The first

<sup>1</sup>Five articles from the Baptist writer above referred to were in the *Independent Chronicle* from March 2 to April 13. They were signed "Philanthropos." He also answered "Irenæus" in two articles in the *Continental Journal*, March 23 and April 6. The controversy between them was then transferred to the *Boston Gazette*, and afterwards to the *Independent Ledger*. It continued for several months.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>*Independent Ledger*, May 22; *Independent Chronicle*, May 18, an article signed William Gordon; May 25, an article signed Francis Faulkner.—Ed.



part of the Third Article in our Bill of Rights says, "The happiness of a people, and the good order and preservation of civil government, essentially depend upon piety, religion and morality, and these cannot be generally diffused through a community but by the institution of the public worship of God, and of public instructions in piety, religion and morality;" which part, said agent, in his publication of December 2, declared a full concurrence with. Upon which a minister of Roxbury, in the Chronicle of May 18,<sup>1</sup> said, "Mr. Backus, by inadvertently concurring fully with this part, gave up the whole cause for which he was agent." This he endeavored to prove, by fixing an emphasis upon the word *Essentially*, and then observing that government can exist without Christianity. And his evident design was to sink the credit of the agent among his brethren, in order to terminate this controversy. But the agent answered all those three publications in one paper,<sup>2</sup> June 26, when he observed, that "no government could ever be established without appeals to the Deity; the knowledge of whom is as much greater under the gospel than it is in pagan countries as seeing in day-light is above feeling in the night. Matt. v. 14; Acts xvii. 27. And men can have no more right to add to God's laws about his worship, and to judge the consciences of such as refuse to submit to their additions, than they have power to cause the day-spring to know his place. Job xxxviii. 12; Luke i. 78. And is not gospel light essentially necessary for the good order of government, although government can exist without it!" And notwithstanding their Third Article expressly excludes all subordination of one religious sect to another, yet he observed that since it was passed, four Baptist brethren had been imprisoned, and a fifth had a cow taken from him, for no other cause than a refusal to acknowledge such subordination. Two of them

<sup>1</sup>This was one of a series of articles by Dr. Gordon, in defence of the Third Article of the proposed constitution.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>The Independent Ledger.—ED.

were of Bridgewater, the others were of Lancaster.<sup>1</sup> Those of Bridgewater were threatened this month with imprisonment for another ministerial tax; but it was prevented in the following manner. One of them was lieutenant of a company of militia; and, as the public credit was sunk so low as to render it exceedingly difficult to raise recruits for our army; news came to him that the town had chosen him a member of a special committee to procure a number of men that were wanted, which news came just after the collector had threatened to carry him to jail for said tax, and prevented it. But a third Baptist from Lancaster was imprisoned at Worcester, June 26, where two of his brethren had been from April 12, and they were confined there until fall.

Yet when the new constitution took place, October 25, 1780,<sup>2</sup> it was said:—

We may rely that the present government will do all it fairly can, by authority and example, to answer the end of its institution, that the members of this Commonwealth may *lead a quiet and peaceable life in all GOD-*

<sup>1</sup>“Two members of the Convention, who resided in the south parish of Bridgewater, were led by these false accusations [against Mr. Backus] to move the collector of their minister’s salary to go with a constable and seize Lieutenant Elijah Ames and his brother Joseph Ames, Jr., members of the First Baptist church in Middleborough, for said minister’s tax, which they declined paying. These officers commanded two regular hearers of Mr. Backus to assist in carrying the recusant brothers to Plymouth jail, but they were promptly disobeyed. ‘Then,’ says Mr. Backus, ‘they went and took to themselves some lewd fellows of the baser sort, and came again with ropes to bind our brethren. And they did bind one of them, and carried them both a mile or two to a tavern, when one of that party paid the money and released the prisoners. . . . Before our said brethren were seized they mildly labored to convince these officers that they had no right to do it. But the constable said, Our churches are built upon the law. Lieutenant Ames replied, I knew that before; but I thought you would be ashamed to own it.’” Life and Times of Backus, p. 240.

“The second Tuesday of March, 1779, the First Precinct in Lancaster voted a salary to their minister, Mr. Timothy Harrington, wherein John Hawks was taxed £6, 16, Nathan Willard, £14, 8, 6; for which they were seized. . . . April 11, and were both committed to Worcester jail on April 12.” Backus’s Manuscripts.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>By vote of the Warren Association, at their meeting at Royalston, September 13, 1780. the following protest was circulated and presented to the General Court which was to decide the question of the ratification of the Constitution:—

We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, inhabitants of this State, who are

LINESS as well as *honesty*, and our liberty never be justly reproached as licentiousness. I know there is diversity of sentiment respecting the extent of civil power in religious matters. Instead of entering into the dispute, may I be allowed from the warmth of my heart to recommend, where conscience is pleaded on both sides, mutual candor and love.<sup>1</sup>

And in the Boston Gazette of February 5, 1781, it was said:—

Last summer, a certain rich man in the county of Plymouth, altered his principles with regard to baptism, was rebaptized, and admitted into Mr. Backus's church in Middleborough. Some neighbors were so uncharitable and censorious as to imagine that this person changed his religion in order to be freed from ministerial taxes. . . . However, it remained a question in the minds of many people, by what means his estate could be exempted legally, inasmuch as they verily supposed that Mr. Backus had declared he would give no more certificates to any body whatsoever, always pleading,

twenty-one years of age and above, of various religious denominations, enter our PROTEST against the power claimed in the Third Article of the declaration of rights in the new plan of government introduced among us; for the reasons following, viz. :—

“1. Because it asserts a right in a people to give away a power they never had themselves; for no man has a right to judge for others in religious matters; yet this Article would give the majority of each town and parish the exclusive right of covenanting for the rest with religious teachers, and so, of excluding the minority from the liberty of choosing for themselves in that respect. 2. Because this power is given entirely into the hands of men who vote only by virtue of *money* qualifications, without any regard to the church of Christ. 3. Because said Article, contradicts itself; for it promises *equal* protection of all sects, with an exemption from any subordination of one religious denomination to another; when it is impossible for the majority of any community to govern in any affair, unless the minority are subject to them in that affair. 4. Because by this Article the civil power is called to judge whether persons can conveniently and conscientiously attend upon any teacher within their reach, and oblige each one to support such teachers as may be contrary to his conscience; which is subversive of the unalienable rights of conscience. 5. Because, as the Convention say, ‘power without any restraint, is tyranny;’ which they explain as meaning the union of the legislative, executive and judicial powers of government in the same hands; and it is evident that these powers are all united in the Legislature, who, by this Article, are empowered to compel both civil and religious societies to make what they shall judge to be *suitable provision* for religious teachers ‘in all cases where such provision shall not be made voluntarily.’—ED.

<sup>1</sup>Cooper's Sermon, pp. 37, 38.—B.

“A Sermon preached before his Excellency, John Hancock, Esq., Governor, the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, October 25, 1780; being the day of the commencement of the Constitution and inauguration of the new government. By Samuel Cooper, D. D.”—ED.



as they received it, that the practice was contrary to the dictates of his conscience. Nevertheless, contrary to the expectation of every one, our assessors have been furnished with a certificate. . . . I hope the public will put the most favorable construction upon the late remarkable conduct of our agent for a thousand souls; that his laudable example will be punctually imitated by all others of the same profession, and thereby finish one part of the tedious dispute which has long subsisted.

This paper was left for him three days after, by a noted lawyer, at a house he was to preach at in Bridgewater. From thence he went into Boston, and demanded the name of the writer of that libel. This was refused by the printer, though he was ready to publish an answer to it. An answer was therefore left, upon an express promise from the printer, that he would not publish a reply without the writer's name. Yet this promise was violated on March 5, without so much as sending the reply to the agent. He was however so unwise as to send another piece, which was published May 7, wherein some expressions were so turned, as to cast the printer's faults upon the public. From hence three or four reviling pieces were published in the Boston papers against him;<sup>1</sup> in one of which he was threatened with a halter and the gallows. Yet for all this noise, they had no other foundation than a line that was given July 12, 1780, which certified that a man in Pembroke was a baptized member of the First Baptist church in Middleborough, signed only by their pastor, at a time when no certificate law had been in force for some months, and none ever could be again, according to said Third Article, which excludes all subordination of any one sect to another. And the line given did not answer to any law ever made in this government, from its foundation to this day. It may therefore be proper in this place to give a distinct account of what the faith and order of these Baptist churches are, against which such opposition has been made.

In general, their faith and practice come the nearest to

<sup>1</sup>See Boston Gazette, May 21, two articles; May 28, June 4.—ED.

that of the first planters of New England, of any churches now in the land, excepting in the single article of sprinkling infants. In particular, they believe ; 1. That God set Adam as the public head of all mankind ; so that when he revolted from heaven, and seized upon the earth as his own, all the human race fell in him, and all bear his earthly image, until they are born again. 2. That in infinite mercy the eternal Father gave a certain number of the children of men to his beloved Son, before the world was, to redeem and save ; and that he, by his obedience and sufferings, has procured eternal redemption for them. 3. That by the influence of the Holy Spirit, these persons individually,<sup>1</sup> as they come into existence, are effectually called in time, and savingly renewed in the spirit of their minds. 4. That their justification before God, is wholly by the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, received by faith. 5. That every such soul will be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto eternal salvation. 6. That, according to God's institution, regenerate souls are the only materials for particular Christian churches. 7. That the right way of building such churches is by giving a personal, verbal account to the church of what God has done for their souls, to the satisfaction of the church. 8. That the whole power of calling, ordaining, and deposing officers, is in each particular church ; although it is ordinarily proper and expedient to call in the advice and assistance of sister churches upon many such occasions. 9. That the whole power of governing and disciplining their members is in each particular church ; though advice and counsel from others, in some cases, is becoming and even necessary. 10. That the government of the church should be wholly by the laws of Christ, enforced in his name, and not at all by the secular arm. 11. That gospel ministers ought to be supported by his laws and influence, and not by tax and compulsion enforced by the civil power. 12. That ministers ought to preach, and not read

<sup>1</sup>Substituted for "each of these persons."—Ed.

their sermons, at least in ordinary times, that being evidently the apostolic practice ; and the contrary enables men to impose upon people, by reading the works of others, and is attended with other evils. 13. That free liberty ought to be allowed for every saint to improve his gifts according to the gospel ; and that the church should encourage and recommend such as are qualified for the gospel ministry. 14. That officers, when chosen and ordained, have no arbitrary, lordly, or imposing power ; but are to rule and minister with the consent of the brethren, who ought not to be called *The laity*, but to be treated as men and brethren in Christ. These are the chief points of faith and order, wherein we differ from others, and for which such resentment has been shewn against us. And in this and the former volume of our history, we have clearly proved that all these points were held by the fathers of Plymouth Colony. And Governor Winslow, one of their first planters, informs us that when they parted with Mr. Robinson, their dear pastor, in Holland, in 1620, he gave them the following advice and solemn charge, viz.:—

“We are now to part asunder, and the Lord knoweth whether ever I shall live to see your faces again. But whether he has appointed it or not, I charge you, before God and his blessed angels, to follow me no further than I follow Christ. And if God shall reveal any thing to you by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry ; for I am very confident that he has more truth and light yet to break forth out of his holy word.” He took occasion also miserably to bewail the state and condition of the reformed churches, who were come to a period in religion, and would go no further than the instruments of their reformation. As for example, the Lutherans could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw ; for whatever part of God’s will he has further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. “And so you see the Calvinists ; they stick where he left them ; a misery much to be lamented, for though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God had not revealed his whole will to them ; and were they now living, they would be as ready to embrace further light as what they had received.” Here (says Winslow) he put us in mind of our church covenant, whereby we promise and covenant with God, and one another, to receive whatsoever light and truth shall be made known to us



from his written word ; but withal exhorted us to take heed what we receive for truth, and well to examine and compare it with other Scriptures before we received it ; for, said he, “ it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick anti-christian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.”<sup>1</sup>

Such were the noble sentiments and solemn charge of Mr. Robinson, that eminent father of the planters in New England, to which I shall annex a caution he gave, in his preface to a defence of their cause ten years before. Says he :—

I desire the Christian reader to take knowledge of this one thing, that as the pretence of zeal in [the] forward ministers against all corruptions is a thick mist, holding the eyes of many well-minded people from seeing the truth, so the person with whom I now particularly deal, trusts to this insinuation above all others, conveying himself under this color into the hearts of the simple, and hereby making way most effectually not only for his [sage-seeming] counsels and advertisements, for the quenching of their affections towards the truth, but also for his idle guesses and likelihoods,<sup>2</sup> with such personal comparisons and imputations as his book is stored with, to alienate men’s hearts from it. But the godly reader is to consider that to accept persons [the person] in judgment is not good, especially in the Lord’s cause [cause of the Lord] ; and that his faith, [the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus], is not to be held in respect of persons. James ii. 1.<sup>3</sup>

Let this be remembered in our next chapter.

<sup>1</sup>Winslow’s Answer to Gorton, pp. 97, 98.

<sup>2</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 5, 6.

<sup>3</sup>Preface to his Answer to Bernard, pp. 5, 6. [Works of John Robinson, Vol. II, p. 3.]

## CHAPTER XXVI.

MAYHEW AGAINST THE DOCTRINES OF SOVEREIGN GRACE.—YET VERY ANGRY AT HAVING HIS CONDUCT EXPOSED.—OTHERS TREATED ABUSIVELY.—OF THE CHARGE OF SEPARATION.—OF BAPTISM.—OF MINISTERS' POWER.—OF UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

Dr. Mayhew published two sermons, in the beginning of 1763, from those words, The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. From whence, after laying down many just observations, he endeavors to prove, that the Lord is good to all the different ranks, orders or species of his intelligent and sensitive creatures; and good and kind to all the individuals of which these species consist. He allows that the terms *all*, *every*, and the like, are sometimes used in a limited sense in Scripture, and that there are many places which must necessarily be so understood; but denies any limitation here, because God's goodness is perfect and infinite, as well as his other perfections. And, beginning with a greater number and coming down to a less, he at last comes to the lowest individual; and if any hold that he is not good to that individual, Mayhew says:—

I think you should paraphrase the text thus: The Lord is good to all *but one*, and his tender mercies are over all his works, *excepting a single* insignificant creature, which either escapes his notice, or at which he is angry, and so makes it miserable, though it neither has nor is capable of offending him.

And he goes on to observe, that John says, God is love; and then says:—

It is worthy of particular remark, that though God is infinitely wise and powerful, &c., as well as good, yet he is never styled in Scripture, Wisdom or Power in the abstract, as he is here styled Love. Perfect goodness, love itself, is his very essence, in a peculiar sense; immeasurable, immutable, universal and everlasting love.<sup>1</sup>

Again says he:—

Nothing was prior, not even the existence of God, to his will to be good. . . . God is then not only eternally, necessarily and essentially, but infinitely or perfectly good. And if so, then equally, universally, and immutably good in all times and places.

Necessity therefore he ascribes to the will of God, though his party strenuously deny that it can be consistent with the liberty of our wills. And he had before asserted, that “there is no medium betwixt God’s being actually kind and merciful to all, and his being positively cruel and unmerciful to some.”<sup>2</sup> And to give his ideas of the atonement, he says:—

Infinite goodness itself, considered in connection with infinite wisdom, requires that order, and the highest veneration for the majesty of God, his laws and government, should be preserved amongst all his reasonable creatures. Their own good essentially depends upon it. And this important end is most effectually attained by the sacrifice of Christ, by whom we have received the atonement. We are assured in the Holy Scriptures, that God forgives the sins of men through this great sacrifice intervening, rather than without any, not because he is in his own nature deficient in goodness, or not perfectly merciful, but because he is infinitely wise as well as merciful. . . . There was a fitness and congruity in it, as the wisest and best method for saving sinful men, without any kind of reference to that common but yet strange supposition, of divine justice being entirely distinct from divine goodness.<sup>3</sup>

It is to be noted, that here he owns that he rejects the common sentiments of our fathers; and, says he:—

I seriously declare, that if I were to form my conceptions of God’s moral character, by such discourses as I have sometimes heard and read, and such as were, by many, thought to be truly evangelical, instead of thinking him really good to all, and his tender mercies over all his works, essentially good, and infinitely the best of beings, I could not but conclude him to be infinitely more unjust and cruel than any other being in the universe!

<sup>1</sup>Mayhew’s Thanksgiving Sermons, pp. 39, 44.   <sup>2</sup>Ibid, pp. 35, 46.   <sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 64.



And he at length ventures to say of infants, “To suppose that . . . the sin of Adam and Eve is or can be so imputed to them, as to render them justly liable to eternal misery, without any offence of their own, is one of the grossest of all absurdities.” And to hold that any of the human race are not chosen in Christ to eternal life, is a doctrine which he rejects in the same manner; after which, he says:—

If, therefore, my brethren, you know of any particular scheme or system of Christianity (so called) two or three of the most distinguishing and leading principles of which, and the basis on which the whole rests, are plainly and certainly repugnant to the doctrine of God’s universal goodness, and his tender mercies over all his works; you may be certain that such scheme or system is false; absolutely and wholly false, so far as it has any connection with or dependence upon those [leading, fundamental and most distinguishing] principles.<sup>1</sup>

He allows that there will be a future punishment to the wicked, but leaves the words concerning it undefined; and concludes with mentioning, that in the other world the meaning of that passage in the Revelation will be more clearly opened than we can conceive of it here, “Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.”

The reader may now judge whether this author had not a design against some of the most important principles of the protestant reformed system of Christianity, as it had long been professed in this and other countries. Yet because Mr. Cleaveland represented his sermons in that light, in his essay to defend that system, Dr. Mayhew called it “A defamatory libel;” and said to Cleaveland:—

Can you possibly think it became you, an obscure person from another province, and one so unlettered as you are, an outcast from the college to which you was a disgrace? . . . Did [Do] you not show the utmost assurance, in thus setting up your little self? . . . Poor, unhappy man! You

<sup>1</sup>Mayhew’s Thanksgiving Sermons, pp. 50, 62, 63, 83, 85.

doubtless thought to emerge from your obscurity, and to appear as a person of some consequence, by this vain attempt. . . . It is as much beneath me to play the critic on such a performance as yours, as it would be particularly to expose the vanity of your criticisms on my sermons. . . . But I will proceed to the main business of this letter, which is to set your falsehood and iniquitous proceedings, with reference to my sermons, in some order before your eyes ; and to administer the reproof and correction which you deserve, or rather a part thereof. For it is only they that hold the *sword of public justice*, that can legally punish such wickedness to the extent of its demerits. Your villainy in this affair appears written, as one may say, even upon your forehead.<sup>1</sup>

And his whole letter of forty-nine pages is in this strain ; which, instead of universal goodness, discovers how such men would treat their opponents, if their power was equal to their wills. A sight of these things moved the President and Corporation of the college, which expelled Cleaveland, to give him the title of A. M. the same year. Yet when Mayhew died two years after, Chauncy reflected upon Cleaveland (as before observed, page 130) and called him an obscure person without reputation. And to this day the persons of those two men are held in such admiration by multitudes, that they are much sooner disturbed at hearing their errors exposed, than at hearing their Maker blasphemed, while they are highly pleased at seeing eminent ministers of opposite principles treated with a high degree of abuse and contempt as appears in what follows.

All establishments of worship by human laws, that ever were erected under the Christian name, were built upon calling the covenant in Gen. xvii. the covenant of grace. Yet our excellent Edwards was separated from his dear flock at Northampton, only for insisting upon a personal profession of sanctifying grace in order for full communion.<sup>2</sup> From thence he went and settled at Stockbridge, on the west borders of our State ; where his successors have endeavored to pursue his plan of reformation. A considerable number of ministers, in various parts of the land, have also labored

<sup>1</sup>Mayhew's Letter of Reproof, 1764, pp. 4—6.

<sup>2</sup>See page 93.

in the same cause. About the close of 1768, Dr. Joseph Bellamy published a small piece upon the Half-Way Covenant; which was soon answered, and he wrote not less than six pamphlets upon the covenant, to prove that a profession of saving faith was a necessary term of communion in the church, and of being active in baptism. The piece on the opposite side, mentioned in page 170, was occasioned hereby. And within six years, above twenty pamphlets were written by different parties upon this subject, through the country from New Jersey to Boston. The name of a Half-Way Covenant was disowned by all these writers, and their controversy turned entirely upon the question, whether a profession of saving faith ought to be required of communicants, or not? For both parties agreed that none should be active themselves in baptism, but such as had a right to come to the other ordinance; and they were as unable to settle this matter as Stoddard and Mather were seventy years before.<sup>1</sup> How to reconcile divine sovereignty with human liberty, and efficacious grace with the use of means for conversion, were also questions that they had long and tedious debates upon. At length a singular act of discipline at Stockbridge seemed to give the other party an occasion, and it was eagerly improved, to give them as bad a thrust with their horns, as ever was given by any bulls in Bashan. It was as follows:—Those who have seen the nature of original sin, cannot tell how to keep up the idea of children's being born in the covenant of grace, without some regard to grace in their parents. And in the same chapter where the unbelieving consort is said to be sanctified by the believer, a widow is required to marry only in the Lord. Therefore, because a young widow in Stockbridge church married an immoral, profane man, in the beginning of 1777, she was censured and excluded from their communion. This occasioned the calling of a council in January, 1779, which was adjourned to May, and from thence to October, when they

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 468, 469.



justified the church in that act. The man who married said widow was from Connecticut; and he got a learned minister from thence to plead his cause in the last of those Councils, who was son to the ruler that sent a man to prison forty years ago, for preaching the gospel.<sup>1</sup> As his client was not relieved by that Council, he published his plea for him, which has passed through three or four editions. It was answered from Stockbridge, upon which he published a larger piece in 1780, entitled, *Letters of Friendship*; which being replied to, he, in 1781, gave what he called a *Gentle Reprimand*. And in 1782 these three pieces were printed in one at Boston. Their evident design was to relieve that woman, to prevent division among their ministers, and to keep up the use of force for their support; all which it is said are accomplished thereby. Be that as it may, it is certain that much deceit and cruelty have been used in this affair. Many would limit the word *Persecution* to corporal punishments; which is so opposite to truth, that reviling and mockery contain a great and cruel part of it. Matt. v. 11; Heb. xi. 36. Colonel Gardiner, who was converted sixty-five years ago, declared that "he would much rather have marched up to a battery of the enemy's cannon, than have been obliged so continually as he was to face such artillery as this."<sup>2</sup> Yet in order to carry his point, this advocate advanced a parable of a church who refused to allow a brother therein to marry a woman he dearly loved, because not a gracious person; and advised him to marry a member of theirs that was sound in the faith, which is most shockingly described; and then saying of her person:—

As to some trifles, which a carnal man would object to, it becomes you, as a spiritual man, to make no objection. It is true, she is of a mean family, and a very weak understanding; she is peevish and fretful to the highest degree; her shape is semicircular; she is what the world calls monstrous ugly; every feature is adapted to mortify carnal desires, which is much better than to have them gratified; she is the queen of sluts, and

<sup>1</sup>See page 69.

<sup>2</sup>Gardiner's Life, p. 35.

without any polite education. But she has grace, saving grace ; she is regenerated ; let your grace wed with hers, and a sweet bride she will be. Moreover, she is past the flower of her age, and we suppose need so requires.<sup>1</sup>

Now is it possible to dress up a church and Scripture phrases in a more odious and scandalous manner than is here done? Yet in his Reprimand, which he calls *gentle*, he insinuates that for any to be offended at it argues guilt ; because, says he, “ It was expressly declared that it is to be applied only as truth applies it.” But when we look into his Plea, we find him saying, “ Let the following parable apply where it *will* apply.”<sup>2</sup> Truth cannot apply it to any church upon earth ; but his *will* has published the names of thirteen ministers in that plea, more worthy than himself, for the world to laugh at as much as they *will*. And this is doubtless the chief reason of its circulating so extensively. But how mean and spiteful is it to treat the word *Grace* in this manner ! Affixing the word to the covenant of circumcision, where God never put it, is the source of that difficulty at Stockbridge. The words *Sanctified* and *Holy*, in I Cor. vii. 14, are both of a kind, and the latter the effect of the former ; and their meaning may be ascertained by I Tim. iv. 5. But if we must go to the law for the meaning of the word *Holy* there, the same word in the law is given as the reason why they should not marry with unholy persons. Deut. vii. 36. Every soul therefore will be self-condemned that affixes the name *Grace* to the covenant of circumcision, and at the same time censures the church at Stockbridge for attempting to act consistently upon it.

His second pamphlet is directed to ministers who had essayed to withdraw from the major party in the country ; to whom he applies the apostolic warning, Beware of dogs, beware of the concision ; which warning was levelled against those who held to the covenant of circumcision after it was out of date, and could not bear to quit all confidence in the

<sup>1</sup>Plea, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Plea, p. 27 ; Reprimand, p. 15.

flesh. Phil. iii. 2, 3. The General Association of ministers in Connecticut, June 3, 1780, stated the nature of those ministers' crime in these words, viz. : " Refusing intercourse of ministerial labors, and to receive our members, on recommendation from the pastors and churches to which they belonged, to their communion, without a particular and personal examination.<sup>1</sup> But in the Boston edition this passage is left out; and some ministers are accused of renouncing communion with others, in consequence of that affair at Stockbridge. Such deceit are men guilty of! And it is asserted, that " the churches in New England are generally full as strict in their practice, as the church at Stockbridge, and require full as much religion in the profession, life, and conversation of the candidate." And the minister of Lebanon (mentioned in page 93<sup>2</sup>) is referred to as an example thereof.<sup>3</sup> Yet he was a man who held tenaciously that the field where saints and the visible children of the wicked one are ordered to grow together, intends the visible church; which an excellent writer says gave others occasion to reflect, " that those churches whose practice is agreeable to his loose principles, do that at noon-day, in the presence of God, angels and men, which the devil did in the night, while men slept!"<sup>4</sup> It is also to be observed, that a member of the church in Stockbridge detected said advocate in several violations of truth, as to matters of fact there. But instead of any honest retraction, he said of that member, " Where he is known, he can perhaps hurt no man's character, either with his tongue or pen; and it is a question whether, at this period of time, he can hurt his own." And again, " He has exerted himself with all his might, to suppress the gospel ministry in this land, laboring among other efforts to remove the only probable means for the support of it."<sup>5</sup> That is,

<sup>1</sup>Letters of Friendship, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup>Solomon Williams.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>Letters of Friendship, pp. 62, 115.

<sup>4</sup>Edwards's reply to Williams, p. 103. [Works, Vol. I, p. 256.]

<sup>5</sup>Letters of Friendship, p. 138. Reprimand, p. 13.



the man he points to, being of the Convention who formed our new constitution, labored to exclude the use of violence from it in supporting religious teachers. And his character was such as to be freely chosen one of the Massachusetts senators, in May, 1781. How then did his opponent despise government!

Mr. Locke long since observed, that learned disputants often act as deceitfully about the main words of their controversy as a trader would do if he took the figure 8, and called it sometimes seven and sometimes nine, as would suit his advantage. And how much was that the case in this dispute? The most puzzling argument of the advocate for the profane man, was declaring that by baptism he was in the church, and ought to have been disciplined, rather than his wife for marrying him. And in 1773, the same author published an address to the Baptists, wherein he represents the covenant of circumcision to be such an ample charter of church privileges, that it would even have been an impeachment of the sacred character, or reflection upon the perfections of God, to expect an express description of who were the subjects of baptism in the New Testament. Now it is certain that every man in Israel who should forbear to keep the passover as it was instituted, must be cut off from his people. Numb. ix. 13. And if the covenant is the same now, every person among their churches who has been sprinkled in infancy must come to the ordinance of the supper, or be excommunicated, be he converted or unconverted, moral or profane. Yet the abovesaid pleader has the effrontery to say to his opponents, "You tell us, gentlemen, that some of us do not agree with you, in our notions of the terms of church communion, or admission of church members. . . . But . . . no mortal knows, or can know, who has grace or who has not. . . . Let us speculate and dispute as long as we please, we must practice alike, or we cannot practice at all."<sup>1</sup> But if many are in darkness, and

<sup>1</sup>Letters of Friendship, p. 20.

know not where they are going, does that prove that others have no true light? And if they love darkness rather than light, can their evils make void the word of Christ? who says, He that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God: and also says, Every tree is known by his own fruit; A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil, for of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. And the way wherein greedy dogs are to be known, who can never have enough, is that they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. They bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him. . . . Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. This is their learning, their logic; from a negative proposition they form a positive conclusion. They are in covenant with death, and agreement with hell, and from thence think to secure themselves; and they scornfully slight all warnings of future danger. But the time is hastening when their bed will be too short for them, and their covering too narrow; and it will be a vexation only to understand the report of the gospel. Is. xxviii. 14—20; Rom. x. 16. Union and communion with God, who is Light and Love, was the life of man at first; and a revolt from him, into darkness and disorder, was death, the penalty of the law. And the character of hell is lying and murder. John viii. 44. Therefore I conclude, that the known use of deceit and cruelty is the covenant with death and agreement with hell, wherewith scornful officers have often thought to secure themselves against present and future dangers. This I take to be a scriptural glass, and return our opponent's compliment upon it. Says he, "Why do the Letters of Friendship offend them, since it is so expressly premised that no person is pointed at in them unless

justly characterized? If my face is dirty, and not fit to be seen, I wash it, and never quarrel with my glass about it."<sup>1</sup> And since his zeal has been so great for the relief of one censured woman, let him appear for another nearer home. For a woman of good character, in the head county of his own State, was censured in 1781, and excommunicated in 1783, by a minister who is a Fellow of Yale College, for no other crime than refraining from coming to the Lord's table with such as hold the Lord's Supper to be a converting ordinance.

This may lead us to take a further view of their claims of power over the churches. About twenty years ago, a minister, who was a Fellow of Yale College, published a pamphlet to prove that the power of ordination is inherent in ministers, and that Christ never gave that power to the church as a body. This he dedicated to their Governor; and he therein allowed that the people have a right to choose their ministers, but not to ordain them, any more than the freemen of Connecticut have to swear their magistrates into office. An answer was written to him, and he made a reply in 1766. But then both his patron and his comparison failed him, because his Governor and several magistrates were left out of office by the people, for favoring the stamp-act. And what could he then do? He slipped over the line, and said:—

The Governor of a province is, by the king's commission, invested with power and authority as such an officer, distinct from the rights, powers and privileges, belonging to the government, by the constitution, charter, and laws of the land. And though the magistracy and other officers, and the House of Representatives, have a legislative and executive authority with him, under his precedency, and act with him in judgment, in many cases; yet are these distinct branches of authority, originating from different fountains of power; the former from special commission from the king, the other from the constitution and laws of the government. I take the case to be much parallel in ecclesiastical government.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Reprimand, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Beckwith's second letter against Lay Ordinations, pp. 42, 43.



And we have shewn (in page 175,) that the Massachusetts ministers claimed a higher power than the king allowed to his Governor; and he was the head of their establishments for worship, both there and in Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> Therefore they are now in a deplorable case; for an ocean three thousand miles wide rolls betwixt the head and the body of that constitution, so that they have only a dead, polluted carcass left in their high places. Ezek. xliii. 7. And those who have so often rejected the reasonable testimonies and petitions of the Baptists, are forced now to become suppliants to them, in order to save their polluted scheme. In a Boston paper,<sup>2</sup> before mentioned, of February 5, 1781, they tell a story of a gentleman's babe, that was taken by an ape and carried to the roof of the house, while he and his family were at church, and a careless maid got to sleep; and yet that the babe was saved by their prayers. Upon which they name the Baptist agent,<sup>3</sup> whom they accuse of doing the like with their religion; but expressed their hopes of having it now returned into its former condition. But herein they appear more contemptible than the priests of Baal did in Elijah's time; for they came out like men, and performed their devotion in the sight of the people, while these only published their prayers in newspapers, and were afraid that their names should be known. And the babe they pray for is not a human creature, but a monster, begotten upon a whore; and great happiness is promised to those who shall dash such little ones against the stones. Psalm cxxxvii. 8, 9. And the Baptists not only covet such happiness, but obedience to government requires it of them. For all protestant kingdoms have set up their king as head of the church; but that name is now excluded from our Legislature. And to move the people to receive this constitution, the compilers of it said to them, "Your delegates did not conceive themselves

<sup>1</sup>See p. 81, Vol. I, p. 509.

<sup>2</sup>The Boston Gazette.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The Baptist agent is not directly named in the article referred to, but some expressions in it were probably intended to designate him.—Ed.

vested with power to set up one denomination of Christians above another ; for religion must at all times be a matter between God and individuals."<sup>1</sup> And no man can take a seat in our Legislature until he solemnly declares, "I believe the Christian religion, and have a firm persuasion of its truth."<sup>2</sup> And as surely as it is true, Christ is Head of all principality and power, and the church is complete in him, and required to do all her acts in his name. Therefore all worship that is supported in any other name is only will-worship. Col. ii. 9, 10, 23 ; iii. 17. And though recourse has often been had to Germany, for matter to prejudice people against equal liberty and believers' baptism, yet twenty thousand mercenaries have lately been brought from thence to fight against such principles, and to deluge our land with blood ; against whom no denomination in America have acted with more prudence and vigor than the Baptists. In the fall of 1778, our Legislature passed an act to debar inimical persons from returning into this State, wherein three hundred and eleven men were named as such ; and our enemies are welcome to point out one Baptist among them if they can. Yet our opponents are still so unwilling to allow equal liberty, and that the power of church government should be in the body of each community, that a pamphlet was published at Boston against it, near the close of 1783, wherein it is said, "If the power of dismissing its pastors is determined to be lodged in the church, without the intervention of any indifferent persons, the clergy of New England are of all men the most miserable."<sup>3</sup> This author was an active member of the Convention which formed our new constitution ; but they are now ensnared in the work of their own hands ; and to move others to relieve them, he says :—

The world produces not a set of ministers more holy in their lives, more free from immorality of every kind, more pure in their doctrines, or more ingenious, animated and pathetic in their addresses, than the clergy of New

<sup>1</sup>Address before the Constitution, March 2, 1780, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>Constitution, Chap. VI.

<sup>3</sup>Thatcher's Observations, p. 11.

England. . . . The observation hath often been made, that it is natural to the clergy to be fond of power. Without dispute they are so, for they are men, and subject to the same feelings and inclinations with others. But in New England, let them have felt ever so much of this inclination, they have not discovered it. Where is the man who can point out the instance, where the ministry have attempted to encroach upon the rights of the churches?<sup>1</sup>

Such attempts have been so openly discovered, that at present I shall only point the reader to his now doing of it, in the name *Clergy* he so often assumes. It is derived from the word [*Κληρονομία*] that is translated *heritage*, in I Pet. v. 3; which name has long been usurped by ministers, in order to avoid the scandal of lording it over the church. And the following facts may discover his vanity in boasting of their general purity as to doctrine.

All Mayhew's arguments against the doctrines of sovereign grace, pointed directly to universal salvation, though the minds of the people were not then prepared to receive it. But an artful teacher from Britain, who by the way of New York came into New England in 1772, by deceitful addresses to the passions of its inhabitants, and procuring an edition of Rely upon Union at Boston in 1779, and another at Providence in 1782, prepared the way for the ministers of the country to discover themselves. And in August, 1782, a pamphlet was published in Boston, which soon passed a second edition, entitled, *Salvation for all men*. Dr. Chauncy, undoubtedly, had a chief hand therein, and most of the ministers in Boston seemed to favor the scheme, and others continued in fellowship with those who have openly owned it. Their main arguments turn upon extending the divine goodness to every individual, and Christ's merits also; although they do not attempt to tell how long it will be before all come to enjoy the same. They say, "There will be a great deal to be done, after the second coming of Christ. . . . Indeed (say they) the doctrine of purgatory, as now

<sup>1</sup>Thatcher's Observations, p. 5.



taught by the Papists, seems to be a corruption of a genuine doctrine held by the ancient fathers, concerning the fire of hell, which will burn up sin and lust."<sup>1</sup> But we do not hear of any yet who have ventured to assert with Origen, that Christ will be crucified in the next world to save devils. Several valuable pamphlets have been written against these delusions. but those ministers are still held in fellowship. Though Dr. Chauncy himself, says, "I am clearly of the mind, that a visibly wicked minister is the greatest scandal to religion, and plague to the church of God; nor is it a hurt but a real service to the cause of Christ, to expose the characters of such, and lessen their power to do mischief."<sup>2</sup> And again he says, "The religion of Jesus has suffered more from the exercise of this pretended right [to make religious establishments] than from all other causes put together; and it is with me past all doubt, that it will never be restored to its primitive purity, simplicity and glory, until religious establishments are so brought down as to be no more."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Salvation for all Men, pp. 14, 21.

<sup>2</sup>Chauncy's Thoughts, 1743, p. 141.

<sup>3</sup>Reply to Chandler, 1770, p. 144.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

UNJUST CONCEPTIONS CONCERNING LIBERTY OF WILL.—THE NATURE THEREOF EXPOSED.—BLOODY EFFECTS OF IT FROM AFAR.—AND ALSO AMONG OURSELVES.—THE ILL EFFECTS OF IT IN THE CHURCHES.—REGENERATION THE ONLY EFFECTUAL REMEDY AGAINST IT.—ADDRESS OF THE BAPTISTS CONCERNING THE RETURN OF PEACE.

When we have conceived an ill opinion of any denomination, it is exceedingly difficult to treat them fairly. An instance hereof is before me, that may be proper to mention. Edwards's treatise on *The Will* has passed through one edition at Boston, and two or more in London, without ever being answered, although it is levelled directly against the turning point of Arminianism, to which the opinion of universal salvation naturally succeeds. Many who do not own either of those names, yet have conceived a strong prejudice against Calvinism, which Edwards professed to own, though not every opinion that Calvin advanced. A late learned performance from London, reprinted at Philadelphia in 1783, contains the following things. The author, when giving his own deliberate ideas, says :—

The visible world demonstrates, it was made by an omnipotent power, and is preserved by the same power. . . . What doth not necessarily exist, must be originally created, and continually upheld by the power that made it. . . . There is no medium betwixt [between] self-existence and dependence on its cause ; therefore a cessation from it of the power that made it is annihilation to it. Thus, as all created things were made, and still subsist solely by the energy of the Creator's will and power, he must necessa-



rily, whilst they exist, be omnipresent with them, in them, and through them; therefore cannot be ignorant of anything relating to them, nor unconcerned about them, or any part of them.<sup>1</sup>

If so, then the creature can do no act but what his Creator sees cause either to order or permit, which is the essence of Calvinism. No, says this author, "We attribute the whole of man's salvation to the light or grace within, first and last, without at all placing man's destruction to the account of his Maker, which John Calvin directly doth."<sup>2</sup> And after attempts to prove this charge from ancient writings, he tries to confirm it from Edwards on the Will. And in reference to his main point, he says:—

We are told, The will is always determined by the strongest motive. Has the will no liberty then at any time? Is it always so forcibly determined, in all its motions, by circumstances and motives successively arising upon it, from the original constitution of things, that every man is necessarily obliged to think, speak and act, just as he doth? . . . Was this really the case, our inevitable acts would certainly render us no proper subjects of reward and punishment; of Come, ye blessed, or Go, ye cursed. We must be equally unentitled to approbation and censure.<sup>3</sup>

But I must tell him and all his friends, that I am much better acquainted with Edwards's writings than they are, and I absolutely know that the ideas naturally arising from the words *Forcibly* and *Inevitable*, as here used, when charged upon Edwards, are entirely unjust and abusive. And it tends to raise an evil temper in those who read the same, against all the friends of Edwards's writings, of whom I am heartily one. I am certain that the author who has thus censured him, is not a greater friend to the full liberty of the human will, and against every idea of positive influence from God to restrain men from good, or to impel them to evil, than Edwards was. And I know that from my inmost thoughts I abhor and detest every thing of that nature, and challenge

<sup>1</sup>Phipps against Newton, pp. 37, 38. [The original and present state of man briefly considered. . . . To which are added some remarks on the arguments of Samuel Newton of Norwich. By Joseph Phipps. New York, 1788, pp. 40, 41.]

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 86. [96.]

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, pp. 97, 98. [109.]

all the sons of men to prove the contrary if they can. Whether said author will like the following description of liberty is uncertain. In a Boston paper of June 21, 1784, we are informed, that a new book of Dr. Chauncy's is now in the press, which gives a view of man, "As an *intelligent moral agent*; having within himself an *ability* and *freedom* to will, as well as to *do*, in opposition to *necessity* from any extraneous cause whatever."

This perfectly agrees with that disregard to God, and to equal liberty among the common people, which has lately been so conspicuous in that metropolis. Perhaps a text could not be found more suitable to preach upon, at the commencement of our new constitution, than the following: "Their children also shall be as aforetime, and *their congregation shall be established before me*, and I will punish all that oppress them. *And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them*, and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord." Jer. xxx. 20, 21. But a noted minister of Boston<sup>1</sup> took out the words here printed in italics and not the rest for the subject of his sermon at that time; in which he told of conscience being pleaded on both sides of the question about religious liberty. And the two sides are exactly these. The Baptists pleaded that Christ's ministers might be supported only by his laws and influence; their opponents pleaded still to be called by his name, but that they could not in conscience give up the use of secular force to support them. The Baptists never asked for any greater liberty in this respect in the country than Boston has long enjoyed; Their opponents plead conscience for denying it to them, which doubtless is supposing that gain is godliness, and from such we are commanded to withdraw. The minister of Chelsea, who in 1778 defied our Legislature to preserve order in the State, if they allowed equal liberty in the

<sup>1</sup>Samuel Cooper, D. D. See p. 230.—ED.

church,<sup>1</sup> was received a member of that Assembly in 1783, to tax others, while he pays none himself. But who can wonder at their treating the people thus, since their treatment of their Maker is so flagrant! claiming his promises without regarding his precepts, which is the practice the tempter would have drawn our Saviour into. Matt. iv. 6, 7. But greater absurdity and blasphemy can scarcely be conceived of, than to claim God's promises to support us in disobedience to his precepts, and to deny his right to govern our wills, further than we please. His authority and commands are certainly a cause without us; but we have already seen that the above writer thought them too severe even for Adam in innocency, and that grace gives an exemption from that severity.<sup>2</sup> But I have seen a record concerning one, who was as zealous for confidence in the flesh as these late disputants are, and had as fair a claim to it as any of them, who at length was made to know that the law was holy, just, and good; that it was spiritual, but he a carnal slave to sin, instead of having such high dignity and liberty as he before imagined he had. And *necessity* brought him most *freely* to preach the faith that he before endeavored to destroy. I Cor. ix. 16; Gal. i. 16, 23. And any person in the world can as soon cease to exist, as cease to desire happiness, and to escape misery. A false imagination of *good* in the forbidden fruit, drew our first parents into rebellion against God; and such imaginations are the only source of sin in all their children. James i. 14, 15. *Good* is still their pursuit, but they have lost the knowledge of who can give it, or of what it is; but the regenerate soul knows both, and this is the precise difference between them. Psalm iv. 6, 7. Who does not know that debtors and criminals are not fit judges in their own causes? yet that is the case with all reasoners against the truth and perfection of God's written word. How would wrong judgment proceed in civil courts, if the judges or jurors were allowed to construe laws according to

<sup>1</sup>Phillips Payson. See p. 220.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 131.



a rule within them, instead of a fixed known standard ! If we believe the word of truth, a most obstinate tyrant, a most hardened wretch, yet *gladly* sent Israel away with rich treasures, the same night which God had told Abraham of four hundred and thirty years before. Exod. xii. 31—33, 39, Psalm cv. 37, 38. Which turn of his will and choice was by a cause without him, which brought him to act voluntarily and exactly according to a previous, immutable decree, and without giving any renewing grace to his soul. But as soon as death was out of view, he eagerly pursued Israel into the Red Sea, where he and his army perished. And none but infidels will pretend to deny the justice of God in that destruction, although it was he that exactly disposed all the circumstances which moved Pharoah voluntarily to act as he did. And the gospel refers to this instance, to show how, by much long-suffering, vessels of wrath are fitted to destruction, according to the sovereign will of God. Rom. ix. 17, 18, 22. And those who will not believe him here, will in vain cry for mercy hereafter. Those who are effectually drawn to Christ by divine teaching, know that they could not have come without it, nor avoid coming most freely with it. John vi. 44, 45. And to hear many speaking evil of things which they know not, but what they know naturally as brute beasts, and in those things to corrupt themselves ; to see them tread down the good pastures, and foul the deep waters, and thrust others with side and shoulder, serves to confirm believers in the truth of revelation, and in the hope of a speedy deliverance from such evil beasts. Jude 10. Ezek. xxxiv. 18, 25. As the wages of sin is death, God cannot be just in paying the same to infants, but upon his right to constitute Adam as their head to act for them, and dealing with them as sinners in him ; for justice cannot pay wages where they are not due. And as Christ came into the world purely to save sinners, infants could have no part in his salvation, if they were not sinners. That infants may partake of that salvation, even in their

mother's womb, is certain. Luke i. 44.<sup>1</sup> And it is as certain, that though the first Adam was a figure of the second in some things, yet he was not so in others ; and in none more plainly than these three, viz. : The one brought death, the other life ; The one by a judicial sentence of law, the other by a free gift of grace ; The one by a single offence ruined the world, the other atoned for many offences, and will finally bring forth a much more glorious world than that which Adam destroyed. I conceive that these ideas, both of the resemblance and the difference betwixt the two public heads of mankind, are plainly contained in the fifth of the Romans, and fifteenth of the first to the Corinthians. Yet how many are there who will have it, that Christ died equally for all the human race, and yet that he saves but a part of them, because their wills defeat his good desires and intentions ? To these, others have succeeded, who assert that he died for every one of them, and will finally bring them all to happiness, though not until many of them have been in hell-flames for thousands of years, to burn up their corruptions. But I boldly declare I would as soon worship the pagan god of flies, as any imaginary saviour that could possibly be mistaken or disappointed in any of his designs. I fully believe that God's plan of government was and is infinitely perfect ; that it is calculated so in infinite wisdom, that all his dispensations shall demonstrate to all intelligent creatures, that all desirable good is to be enjoyed in obedience to his revealed will, and nowhere else ; but that disobedience thereto is infinitely hateful and dreadful, how pleasing soever it may appear at first ; that he gives sinners opportunity to try their inventions to the utmost extent of them, most plainly warning them of their danger in the mean time ; and that examples of their defeat, and of just

<sup>1</sup>Probably most of his readers will question the author's inference from this passage. The author himself might have considered it more carefully if the inference had been used in his day, as it has in later times, as an argument for infant baptism, —Ed.

punishments inflicted upon the impenitent, will be visible to the blessed, and cause high praises to him forever and ever ; which words are equally made use of to describe the continuance of his glories, the happiness of the saints, and the misery of the wicked. Rev. v. 13 ; xiv. 9—11 ; xix. 3 ; xx. 10 ; xxii. 5. As it was the old serpent that poisoned our first parents, by setting up reason against revelation, especially in calling in question the truth of the penalty of the law, so the same poison is exceedingly visible and pernicious among their children at this day.

It is most certain that the reformation in the church of England, which took place in the days of Edward the Sixth, was produced by preaching the doctrines of original sin, justification by faith in Christ's imputed righteousness, and his sovereign and efficacious grace upon the souls of men, to their eternal salvation. And it is as certain that a departure from these doctrines has been growing upon that church ever since. Taylor's work against Original Sin, though he was a dissenter, yet was brought into the east part of Connecticut by an itinerant missionary of the church of England above forty years ago ; and it has had an extensive circulation through this country. Many of other denominations were pleased with it, while they tried hard to persuade the world that Whitefield was a dishonest man, and upon evil designs against this country, when he preached the gospel according to the doctrines established by law, both in Old England and New.<sup>1</sup> Ten years after, a professor of Harvard College tried to fix that odium upon his character in the minds of his pupils ; and at the same time denied the liberty of gospel ministers to preach in any parish where another was settled, without his license.<sup>2</sup> And if facts are fairly examined, will it not be found, that those in our day, who have been most fierce for taxing others where they are not represented, yet are not willing to own that their Maker had a right to constitute Adam as their representative ?

<sup>1</sup>See p. 75. <sup>2</sup>Wigglesworth's Lectures concerning Ministers' Power, 1754, pp. 14—16.



In 1628 a charter was granted to the Massachusetts from the British Court, which exempted this colony from all taxes thereto, but only the fifth part of the gold and silver ore that should be found in it ; and it gave the colony the exclusive right to choose their own Governors. But in 1684 these privileges were wrested from them, and their lands were all claimed by the crown, and great tyranny was here exercised for some years, until the king was driven from his throne, and another was placed thereon by compact. He gave us a new charter of many privileges, but reserved a power to tax our trade, and an arbitrary power in the crown to appoint our Governors, and to demand our property for their support. And, as those who turn every one to his own way can never have enough, the remainder of our charter privileges were taken away in 1774, and fleets and armies were sent to compel this country into an unlimited submission to the wills of the British parliament. And after many terrible frowns of Providence upon their unmerciful proceedings, a speech from the British throne of November 2, 1780, said :—

The present arduous situation of public affairs is well known ; the whole force and faculties of the monarchies of France and Spain are drawn forth, and exerted to the utmost, to support the rebellion of my colonies in North America, and, without the least provocation or cause of complaint, to attack my dominions ; and the undisguised object of this confederacy manifestly is to gratify boundless ambition, by destroying the commerce, and giving a fatal blow to the power of great Britain. By the force which the late parliament put into my hands, and by the blessing of Providence on the bravery of my fleets and armies, I have been enabled to withstand the formidable attempts of my enemies, and to frustrate the great expectations they had formed ; and the signal successes which have attended the progress of my arms in the provinces of Georgia and Carolina, gained with so much honor to the conduct and courage of my officers, and to the valor and intrepidity of my troops, which have equalled their highest character in any age, will, I trust, have important consequences in bringing the war to a happy conclusion. It is my most earnest desire to see this great end accomplished ; but I am confident you will agree with me in opinion, that we can only secure safe and honorable terms of peace by such powerful and respectable preparations, as shall convince our enemies, that we will not submit to receive the law from any power whatsoever.

Lord Cornwallis was one of his most successful officers in Carolina, who there gave orders, on August 30, 1780, "that every militia man who had borne arms with us, and afterwards joined the enemy, shall be immediately hanged." Yet on December 30, General Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot, as Commissioners from the king for restoring peace to the colonies, gave out a declaration from New York, "That Great Britain had manifested the sincerity of her affectionate and conciliatory intentions, in removing forever your pretended grounds of discontent, by repealing among other statutes those relating to the duty on tea, and the alterations in the government of Massachusetts Bay, and exempting forever not only the continental, but the insular colonies from parliamentary taxations;" and so invited all or any of "the colonies in rebellion" to come in and receive pardon and peace. And before they had got through they said, "The loyal are exhorted to persevere in their integrity for the preservation of their country, its religion and liberties." And this declaration arrived and was published in Boston just before the king's speech, which expressed a resolution not to receive law from any power whatsoever, not even excepting the power of heaven. And how much better were the wills of men in this land.

For six months after the war began, the general welfare of the country was kept so much in view, that men enough were easily obtained to fill up our army, which was also plentifully supplied with provisions. But a committee from the southward met at the camp in or near Cambridge, in October, 1775, to settle the affairs of the next campaign, who raised the wages of officers, and lowered those of the private soldiers, which directly caused an uneasiness; and a looking to private interest, both in and out of the army, gradually prevailed from that time, until in the fall of 1780, it procured a promise of half-pay to officers during life. And just before the news of peace arrived, this selfishness arose so high in the officers, as to lead them to appoint a

public meeting in the camp at West Point in the beginning of March, 1783 (without leave from General Washington, who was there) to consult about either marching in arms to Philadelphia, and compelling the Congress to grant their desires, or else drawing off into the wilderness, and leaving the country defenceless to the ravages of the enemy. And though, with a wise and masterly address, General Washington prevented their taking either of those horrid steps, yet none can tell how much influence these contrivances had, to produce a vote in Congress for five years whole pay in lieu of the half-pay during life. And though the war was levelled against hereditary claims of power over others, and to secure equity among all the inhabitants, and the articles of union and confederation between these States expressly forbade their granting any titles of nobility, yet in May following, those officers presumed to incorporate a society among themselves, to have a hereditary succession, and each a golden medal and blue ribbon, with a large fund of money at command, and power to elect our chief rulers into their society. This discovered their dispositions, whatever alterations may have been made in their society since.

The above proceedings have caused unspeakable difficulties through these States, which have been loudly complained of by multitudes, who still are bewitched with the opinion, that they are born in a like covenant as the seed of Abraham were, which gave them a right to make servants of others who were not in that covenant. Yea, and also with the opinion that civil Legislatures have a right to empower some men to covenant for others with religious teachers, and to compel them to fulfil it. And this practice (which is directly against the law of God even as it was given to the Jews) was at the commencement of our new constitution called GODLINESS, in capitals, while *honesty* was put in small letters.<sup>1</sup> Which things are not mentioned because I think myself better by nature than others, for I know the contrary.

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 229, 230.—ED.



And after renewing grace was granted, I was such a dull scholar in Christ's school, that I was thirty-two years in learning a lesson of only six words, viz.: *One Lord, one faith, one baptism.* It took ten years to get clear of the custom of putting baptism before faith, and near five more to learn not to contradict the same in practice ; after which above seventeen trying years rolled over us, before we could refrain from an implicit acknowledgment of more than one Lord in religious affairs. And what noise has been made in the world since, only because we will not give up this lesson, and obey man rather than God ! And the chief movers therein, undoubtedly, are men who deny his right to impute Adam's sin to them, or to damn them for not receiving Christ's imputed righteousness for their justification. Neither can any own these doctrines, and be self-consistent, in holding that natural birth or human doings can bring infants into the covenant of grace. If it be of grace, then it cannot be of the birth or works of nature. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, says our blessed Lord. Circumcision was a type of his death, and of our being cut off from confidence in the flesh, and ingrafted into him by regeneration. Before his personal coming, this sign was, by divine institution, put upon many who had not the thing signified within them ; but as Abraham had it, it was a *seal* to him, while it was only a sign or type to many others. Rom. iv. 11 ; Col. ii. 11, 12. By the covenant with Abraham, none were to be circumcised but such as were born in his house, or bought with his money : in which capacity he was an eminent type of Christ, whose church is constituted of persons purchased with his blood, and regenerated by his spirit. Aaron was also a noted type of him, and his lawful seed a type of regenerate souls, who are the spiritual house which is built upon the foundation that is disallowed of men. And in vain do any of them try to prove the covenant to be the same now that it was with Abraham, until they can prove that Christ is hereafter to come and endure another crucifix-

ion. *Mystery, Babylon*, which means the mystery of confusion, was erected by *confounding* type and anti-type, church and state, together. For a woman after marriage to refuse to be governed by her husband, and to say, I will go after my lovers, that gave me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink, proves her to be a harlot. And by this practice the church of Rome became the mother of harlots, and abomination of the earth. Kings have committed fornication with her ; and by her sorceries were all nations deceived. How much have protestants been deceived with these abominations ! To set up any mere man as head of the church, is an imitation of those who crucified our blessed Lord, by holding to an earthly kingdom of the Messiah. The taking away of the property of the people by force, for the priests in the church of Israel, brought amazing vengeance upon those who gave countenance to that practice ; yet the like iniquity has been tenaciously held fast, by men who call themselves ministers of the gospel ; and forcing away the property of the Baptists for such, has been done in various parts of this country, even down into this year 1784 ; and much clamor is made against them, only for refusing to give any countenance to such wickedness. But the call from heaven to all the saints is, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues ; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Rev. xvii. 5 ; xviii. 3, 4, 5, 23.

Late reasonings have set the creature man so high, as to deny that a cause without him can determine his choice ; while they hold that God's choice must be determined by what he sees in the creature, and not in himself. But the only seed that can produce the new birth gives such a turn to the mind, as to view all flesh but as fading grass, and the inhabitants of the world but as grasshoppers before God ; yea, as a drop of the bucket, and small dust of the balance. And to set the contrast in its full light, it is declared that all

nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. This is the incorruptible seed, of which souls are born again. Isai. xl. 6—17; I Pet. i. 23, 24. In our natural darkness we imagine that our obligation to serve God and to come to Christ depends upon our will and pleasure; and that when we get ready to set about the work in earnest, his goodness and mercy will necessarily bring him to appear for our help, and to pardon and save us. Whereas, in truth, it is as much impossible for any rational person ever to be exempt, for one moment, from obligation to love God with all his powers, and to love his neighbors as himself, as it is for him to escape out of God's presence, or to put an end to his own existence. When Christ came and laid down his life for us, he gave the fullest demonstration of the truth and love of God, (as it was previously revealed in predictions and figures) and greatly enhanced our obligation to love and obey him; and also clearly opened the way for our doing it, in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. The oldness of the letter lays every sin and defect as a bar in the way of approach to a holy God; but the newness of the spirit, while it cuts us off from any confidence in the flesh, makes all our sins and wants powerful arguments for our daily coming to the throne of grace for supplies. Though Adam in innocency could have no idea of a mediator, or of pardon and cleansing from sin; yet his obligation to the God of truth made it his indispensable duty to believe and obey him, in all his revealed will, and highly criminal to call the same in question. And unbelief still remains unspeakably criminal in his posterity; for their natural powers of thinking and choice are not lost. Therefore the more unable we are to love God with all our powers, and to believe and obey his revealed will, the more guilty, and inexcusable; because we love the creature instead of the Creator, and regard lying vanities in opposition to eternal truth; which is confirmed by every event that ever happened. Good men and bad, angels and devils, all act



according to the characters given of them, in the Holy Scriptures. No soil can bear good wheat until the roots naturally in it are broken up, and the wheat sown therein ; so the new birth cannot be wrought in any but by divine revelation. It is not a creation of new faculties, but the giving new ideas and dispositions, which were our indispensable duty before, but our evil hearts were contrary thereto. Breaking up of the thorns and briars in a field, is removing things which ought not to be there ; and the good seed being sown, and a union formed between the seed and the soil, the birth, the growth is produced. By such means as these, great relief was granted to our country, when its ruin seemed inevitable. For at the close of 1779, public credit was sunk so low, that forty paper dollars would not buy more of the produce of our own country, than one would in 1775 ; and from hence to the end of the war very few soldiers were raised in New England, but upon private, personal securities ; and large quantities both of clothing and provisions, that were raised for them, never reached their camps, by reason of the unfaithfulness and treachery in those who should have conveyed the same to them. But in the year 1779 a fresh revival of religion was granted, which increased in the year 1780, and spread the most extensively and powerfully through New England, that any revival had done for near forty years. Besides considerable additions that were made to some of the Congregational churches, it greatly increased the Baptist churches that were formed before, and raised about twenty new ones. According to the best accounts yet obtained, there were not less than two thousand persons baptized upon a profession of saving faith, in New England, only in the year 1780 ; and chiefly in the States of New Hampshire and the Massachusetts. And though true religion is directly opposite to wars and fightings among men, yet it teaches an inviolable regard to truth and equity ; and no small part of the duty of love is a defence of the innocent, when their rights are invaded, and their lives are in danger. The gos-

pel shews that the only lawful use of the sword, is to punish such as work ill to their neighbor; and subjection to the powers that do it is a matter of conscience with believers. Rom. xiii. 1—10. And this revival of religion was undoubtedly a great means of saving this land from foreign invasion, and from ruin by internal corruption; though the latter is still so great, that there has been but little rejoicing, and less thankfulness, for the deliverance and peace which are wonderfully granted to us. The Warren Association, at their meeting, September 9, 1783, gave their views of these times, in the following address to their countrymen, viz. :—

DEARLY BELOVED: After a long and very distressing war, we rejoice at this opportunity of congratulating you, upon the return of peace to the nations, and to our land in particular, with a prospect of unspeakable advantages to the present and future generations. Indeed we are not insensible that many are sorrowful and complaining, instead of rejoicing at these times; several causes whereof are obvious. For ever since our first parents revolted from heaven, in order to please their eyes and their taste, their children have been chiefly influenced by carnal sense, instead of reason and truth. And the burthen of taxes, the great scarcity of cash, with the pressing calls for money from every quarter, have drawn a terrible gloom over many minds; which is greatly increased by a view of the untried scene of political existence into which we have entered, where none can tell what is before us; and we have no such arm of flesh to trust to as formerly. Added to which, are a great variety of disappointments and losses, with the use of corrupt schemes to repair them, and to get more power and gain, among all orders of men in the land, which make a number think our case almost desperate. But the gospel gives light, and opens the most glorious prospects, where nature can see nothing but darkness. It assures us that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, and forbids anxiety about to-morrow, because a sparrow cannot fall to the ground, nor an hair from your heads, without the providence of our heavenly Father. And what confirmations of this truth have we had! yea, and which now surround us! A main hope of our enemies was built upon the prospect of starving us into submission; but, behold! the showers and shines of heaven were not at their command; no, nor the hearts of the people neither. The events of this war are unparalleled. . . . Deceitful reasonings from the power given to the members and rulers of the Jewish church, have persuaded people for many ages, that some men are born with a right to govern others, and that they are accountable to the people for what they receive and do; which has been the grand source

of oppression and tyranny through the world. But how has God rent away this veil of darkness ! The American Revolution is wholly built upon the doctrine, that all men are born with an equal right to what Providence gives them, and that all righteous government is founded in compact or covenant, which is equally binding upon the officers and members of each community. . . . And as surely as Christianity is true, Christ is the only lawgiver and head of his church ; whom he will save from the power both of gallies and gallant ships, those modern engines of tyranny. Is. xxxiii. 16—24. And his laws determine that his ministers shall neither be tyrants nor slaves ; shall neither be supported by forcing away any man's property without his personal consent, nor go a warfare of their own charges. Matt. x. 7—10, Luke x. 3—12 ; I Cor. ix. 7—14. Opposite extremes about these matters have long served to uphold each other. The terms *Hire* and *Reward*, on one hand, have been taken to drag this affair into secular courts ; and the word *Freely*, on the other, to excuse people from doing anything to support their ministers ; as if freedom belonged only to ministers, while the people were slaves to their lusts. Whereas it is as clear as the daylight, that the obligations between pastors and people are mutual ; and that their union and welfare greatly depend upon a free and faithful discharge thereof, out of supreme love to God ; viewing themselves to be but stewards of all their gifts and treasures, who must soon give account unto him of their stewardship : yea, and that he only can give them success or enjoyment in any undertaking whatever. These laws naturally tend to keep his flock from being devoured by such as feed themselves and not the flock, as well as to exclude all members therefrom who refuse to be governed by him ; and likewise to guard against all sinful divisions. Corrupt men will not have such advantage as they formerly had, to deceive the simple with artful addresses to their passions, either about the licentiousness or tyranny of others. The cry of persecution will be stopped, while those who love the truth will endeavor to unite with societies who walk most clearly therein, and be in earnest to fill their places with duty and usefulness ; knowing that mutual esteem and confidence are most surely promoted thereby, without which societies are unhappy, if not broken and dissolved.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE RISE OF A CHURCH ON MARTHA'S VINEYARD.—THE STATE OF THE BAPTISTS IN THE COUNTY OF BARNSTABLE.—ALSO IN THE COUNTY OF PLYMOUTH.—OF A RIOT AT HINGHAM.—OF THE BAPTISTS IN BRISTOL COUNTY.—LIKEWISE IN SUFFOLK, ESSEX, AND MIDDLESEX.—IN THE COUNTIES OF WORCESTER AND HAMPSHIRE.—OF A REVIVAL OF RELIGION TO THE WESTWARD.—ALSO TO THE NORTHWARD.—AND ON OUR EASTERN SHORES.

The next thing before us, is to give a distinct though brief account of the late revival of religion, and of the state of the Baptist churches.<sup>1</sup> And we may begin with the affairs of Martha's Vineyard, an island about twenty miles long, and ten broad, whereon are the towns of Edgarton, Tisbury, and Chilmark. They are a county by themselves, for holding of inferior courts, from whence they may appeal to superior courts in other counties. From Falmouth, in Barnstable county, to the entrance of the harbor of Holmes's Hole, on said island, is nine miles; which harbor is much frequented by those who sail upon these coasts, and piloting of vessels round Cape Cod and elsewhere is no small part of the business of its inhabitants. The line betwixt Edgarton and Tisbury comes down upon the head of said harbor, so that the inhabitants round it are upon the corners of two towns, seven or eight miles from the meeting-houses in either of them; which I am told some of their children of fifteen

<sup>1</sup>A more detailed account of particular churches is in a latter part of the book. Whatever notes we shall add in relation to them are therefore, for the most part, deferred.—ED.

or sixteen years old never saw. For the soil is generally thin and barren, so that but very few horses can be kept there, and the men are much employed upon the sea, or in getting sustenance out of it. Yet they have been all taxed to a worship that they or their families could but rarely attend, and from which they seemed to get no good ; so that at length very few of them went to any public worship at all. It is said, however, that but few intemperate persons were found among them. The war added greatly to their calamities, as our State could not protect them, and they lay at the mercy of our enemies ; who came there with a powerful force in the fall of the year 1778, and took from the island all their arms and ammunition, besides three hundred head of cattle and a thousand sheep, and most of the produce of the land near said harbor. Dark indeed did their case appear ; and on December 26, was such a cold snow storm as caused the death of seventeen men in a privateer sloop at the east end of the island, and seventy-five more in a brig near Plymouth. Yet this terrible storm drove into a creek, at the head of Holmes's Hole, such a vast quantity of bass as supplied the inhabitants of the whole island with as many of them as they were pleased to take, and more than they could make use of. And not long after, a British vessel was cast away upon the west part of the island, which gave the inhabitants a good supply of rice. And greater favors of another kind were before them. By afflictive providences, and private means of grace, four persons near Holmes's Hole were awakened to a sense of their sin and danger, and in the spring of 1780, they experienced a happy deliverance of soul. And no sooner was light granted to them than they endeavored to hold the same forth to others, which brought them to set up religious meetings, and a number were hopefully converted by these means. And about the last of June they sent for Elder Lewis, of Freetown, who went over in July, and preached and baptized a number of them. He did the like again in August and October, as

Elder Hunt also did in November; and, by particular request, I met them there in December, when a careful inquiry was made into their sentiments and views, and the order of the gospel, with the solemn nature of the Christian profession, was publicly laid open and inculcated. After which, on December 21, 1780, we saw fifty persons solemnly sign covenant together, to whom six more were added on the 24th, and all then sweetly communed together at the Lord's table. The high sheriff of the county was a leading member of this church, which contained some persons of every rank among them. The husband of one of them was born among the Portuguese, and now was newly returned from a distressing captivity in England. By seeing and hearing of these wonders of divine grace, his vows in trouble were brought with authority upon his mind; and though the tempter set in violently with his suggestions, that there was no mercy for him, and that he had better go and drown himself, in the evening after this communion, yet sovereign grace prevented it, and set his soul at liberty, so that he was soon after baptized and joined to that church, as a considerable number more also did. I have received no late accounts of the Indian Baptist church on that island.<sup>1</sup>

Our next view is of the county of Barnstable. The Separate minister at Harwich, named in page 79, has removed to Tamworth, in New Hampshire, and the other of Barnstable is now a pastor of a Congregational church at Newmarket, in that State; and Baptist churches are raised out of each of those Separate societies. A Baptist church was formed and organized at Harwich in 1757; but by advice of a council, their minister was deposed from his office in 1777, for immoral conduct, and they are now destitute of a pastor, though they have an agreeable teacher with them. They have some members from Wellfleet, where our ministers have frequently preached to attentive audiences. A small parish in the south part of Harwich got a Baptist minister

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 347.



from the west part of our country to preach in their parish meeting-house; and in 1781 they formed a Baptist church there, and he was ordained their minister; but he is upon the Arminian plan, and not in fellowship with our churches. The Baptist church in Barnstable was constituted June 20, 1771; but they were very small for seven years, and then a revival was granted, and another in 1781; and things at present appear encouraging among them, though they have not been able as yet to get a settled pastor. There is the beginning of a Baptist society in Sandwich, in that county; but we may truly say of our times, The harvest is great, and the laborers are few.

The rise of the First Baptist church in Middleborough has been described; but coldness and stupidity had greatly prevailed therein for five years before the late revival of religion, which began in the latter part of 1778, and was at its height in July, 1780. The first person added to the church in this revival was on February 28, 1779, and eighty-five have been received since, above two-thirds of whom belong to Bridgewater, in the west part of which town a large Baptist meeting-house was built last year, eight miles from ours, and they have now got a minister to preach to them, though as yet they remain a branch of our church. The rise of the second Baptist church in Middleborough was as follows: Mr. Thomas Nelson, who was born in the town, June 6, 1676, just before Philip's war broke out, removed into that part of it called Assawamset, in 1717; about which time he joined the First Baptist church in Swanzey, as his wife also did August 5, 1723. In 1753 he and his sons, with a few more, set up a meeting at his house, and obtained Mr. Ebenezer Hinds to preach to them. Four miles southwestward from thence, Mr. James Mead was ordained pastor of a Separate church in 1751; but he died in 1756, after which the body of his church became Baptists, and Mr. Hinds's hearers joined with them, and ordained him their pastor, January 26, 1758, in which office he still continues. Mr. Nelson

died before this church was formed, in his eightieth year ; but his wife, Mrs. Hope Nelson, lived to be a member of it and communed with them at the Lord's table after she was a hundred years old. She died December 7, 1782, aged a hundred and five years and seven months. Her living posterity, besides all that had deceased, were two hundred and fifty-seven in the year 1774. But as some of them are removed to Nova Scotia, and to other distant places, their number when she died has not since been obtained. Many of them are members of Baptist churches, and three of them are public teachers therein. Mr. Ebenezer Jones was ordained the pastor of the Third Baptist church in Middleborough, October 28, 1761 ; but whisperers, who separate very friends, caused such a division there two years after, as not only removed him from being their pastor, but also broke up their meeting for a time. He has been preaching for some years past at Steventown, in the county of Albany. Mr. Hunt was ordained the pastor of said church, October 30, 1771 ; in which year they had a considerable revival, and another much greater in 1780. Their letter to the Warren Association, in September that year, gives the following account of it. Say they : —

In our letters for several years past, we had to lament the sad decay of religion among us, and the abounding of iniquity, which in the last year increased to the greatest degree ever known in this place. Men were bold in wicked ways, and all the endeavors of a few faithful ones among us could not prevent it. But blessed be God, things have taken another turn this year ; for when sin, the great enemy of mankind, was coming in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up a standard against him. About the middle of March, on a Lord's day in the afternoon, there appeared a very visible alteration in the face of the whole assembly ; they were all attention to the word, and concern was discovered in their countenances, which increased so that by the beginning of April several scores of persons appeared under deep concern about their souls and eternal salvation. And since the work began we have reason to hope that about one hundred souls have been turned from darkness to light, and eighty-three have been baptized.... It is very remarkable in our view to see so many suddenly turned from darkness to light, and have such a clear understanding of the

nature of religion, and so ready to practise what they know. . . . We have been remarkably free from disorders, by means of which those who appeared to oppose this work, (who are chiefly of another denomination) and were waiting to see how things turned out, have seen such things as have greatly stilled and convinced them. Thus has it pleased our gracious God to visit a most unworthy people, and, after a dark night of sorrow and mourning, to make us glad with his salvation.<sup>1</sup>

From the beginning of the revival to September, 1781, more than a hundred persons were added to that church, above half of whom were males.

A branch of this church is at Marshfield, where a steady society for worship has been kept up for some years; and in the late revival a number of persons were hopefully converted in Scituate, on the north borders of our county; and frequent religious meetings were held there. This caused a

<sup>1</sup>From letters of Mr. Hunt to Mr. Baekus we quote the following:—

“God is doing wonders amongst us. We have baptized eleven, and there are not far from thirty more hopefully brought into liberty. . . . The work has increased from the beginning; this week has brought forth more than any time before, and yesterday was such a time as I never saw. After the worship was over at the meeting-house, a body of the people repaired to my house, and we began to sing and pray. The divine power was like Pentecost; and by sunset, six persons obtained liberty, and such rejoicing of saints and such cries of sinners I never heard.” Dated May 31, 1780.

“We thought, about ten or twelve days ago, that the work was abated, but since then it has revived. Numbers are newly struck under convictions, and seem as powerfully impressed as any that we have seen; and some brought out; and others who have received comfort, understandingly led into baptism and have cheerfully gone forward in that ordinance. The number is as follows; viz: Baptized on May 12th, five; 13th, two; 14th, one; 23d, three; June 14th, seventeen; 27th, six; July 5th, eleven; 11th, nine; total, fifty-four. This number have been hopefully converted since the middle of March, except four or five. In the number are four boys about twelve years old, three of whom were awakened on the fast day when you were with us. I suppose the whole that have been brought in are just about seventy, in our society only.” Dated July 12, 1780.

“When I returned from the Association, I found about half a dozen young converts brought out clear while I was gone. Six were baptized last week; and last Lord’s day another, a young man who had been very careless, appeared to give as clear, convincing declaration of a work of grace in his soul, as any one out of ninety which we have heard among us since the work began. . . . When I think of these things, together with the favor of God to my own soul, I sometimes conclude myself the happiest man in the world. O for humility and gratitude! I have preached three sermons lately at Rochester, and our gracious Lord was with me. Some were pricked in the heart. I believe the Lord has begun there. The work goes on gloriously at the Vineyard.” Dated October 14, 1780.—ED.



great uneasiness in the adjacent town of Hingham, where their ministers had long taught the world to tyrannize over the church.<sup>1</sup> And as an exhorter from Rhode Island government had attended several meetings in Scituate, the people of Hingham could not be content without shewing their particular resentment against him. Therefore one of them followed him into Abington, as he was upon his return home, and importuned him to go and hold a meeting at his house. This he at last consented to; and a number of people met there for religious worship in the evening of May 28, 1782. But just as they were going to begin their exercise, a large mob came up, whose leader was a communicant in one of the churches in Hingham, and, by leave of the man who had invited said exhorter to his house, they went in and seized him, and carried him away with the Bible in his hand; but upon his telling them that it was the best law he ever heard of, they knocked it out of his hand, and stamped it under foot, with oaths and execrations too horrid to be repeated! And they bruised and injured his body, as well as tore his clothes; and forcibly carried him and two other baptized brethren out of Hingham; and afterwards threatened his life, if he ever came there again. By good advice, a complaint was exhibited to the Grand Jury of that county against the chief of those rioters, and a bill was found against five of them, supported by eight witnesses; and four of the rioters were arraigned before the Court at Boston, October 10, and pleaded Not guilty; upon which their trial was appointed to be on January 14, 1783; and they were laid under bonds then to appear; and the Court bound the witnesses also to appear at that time, four of whom were men, and the others women. The season proved to be exceeding difficult, by reason of snow, ice and a severe air, yet the four male witnesses appeared at the time appointed, but none of the rioters, neither was any forfeiture of their bonds exacted; but their trial was put off for two days, and

<sup>1</sup>See p. 62.

all the witnesses were required then to appear. A sleigh was therefore procured to carry two of the female witnesses ; but as they called at a friend's house in Hingham in the evening, to refresh themselves, it was conveyed away and cut to pieces, and they could not find their horse till next day. Yet all the eight witnesses appeared in Boston at the time last appointed ; but then the lawyers prevailed to have the trial put off until April ; one of whom was the man that pleaded conscience for supporting worship by tax, in our conference at Philadelphia, mentioned in page 200. But the world may now see what consciences such men have. In the spring those rioters found that they could no longer put the case off, and then they were in earnest to settle it without a public hearing, which was finally done, by their engaging to pay all costs. But let the politicians of Boston remember, that it is but a few years since they declared to the world, that a delay of justice is a denial of justice ; and therefore that wherein they judged others they are self-condemned. And they appear more openly so from the following instance. The burthen of our civil taxes being exceeding heavy, and a pair of oxen being exposed to sale therefor in Taunton, opposition was made against the sale ; until a gentleman offered a generous price for them, and then the matter was settled. Yet to deter persons from any such thing for the future, two men of Taunton were seized in the night and carried off to Boston by armed men, the August after said riot at Hingham. What right they had thus to bring men out of another county, belongs not to me to determine ; but if an impartial regard to the public peace, as well as to the rights of Christianity, had prevailed in the breasts of some men in Boston, could those rioters in their own county have possibly been indulged as they were, and those sufferers have been so cruelly treated ?

Officers in the church as well as the State often do much mischief if unfaithful, and much good if faithful, in their several stations. Our churches in Swanzey and Rehoboth

have had large experience of this. The blessings which the first church of Swanzeý enjoyed under the successive ministrations of their elders, Miles, Luther and Wheaton, are touched upon in Volume I, pages 284, 406, 499; Volume II, pages 29, 31. Mr. Samuel Maxwell was ordained a colleague with the last of them the year before his death. Mr. Maxwell lived to a great age, and was esteemed a pious man; but he was so unsteady in his principles and conduct, as to cause much unhappiness in the churches. On this account he was, by his own request, dismissed from Swanzeý in 1739, and though he took the charge of the Baptist church in Rehoboth six years after, yet he did not continue four years with them. In 1742 said church in Swanzeý settled a gifted minister from Narragansett, who had a thronged audience for a few years, yet then he was accused of the sin of uncleanness, which charge he never cleared up, but went off and left the church. Their next minister was accused of taking unjust methods to get into that place; and he was much influenced by a few men in the church who were attached to Arminianism; and by these means, the church that had two hundred members in pious Elder Wheaton's days, was reduced to a very small number, and the congregation also. After about thirty years he was dismissed at his own request, and removed away. And as the meeting-house and minister's house in Warren were burnt by the enemy, and the place was still exposed to their rage, they agreed at present to unite with Swanzeý church, three miles off; and their pastor was called and settled there. And such a divine blessing was granted, that when I was there in October 1781, I was informed that within two years about two hundred persons had been added to the two churches in Swanzeý. The former elders of the Second church in Swanzeý are before mentioned.<sup>1</sup> Their next elder, Job Mason, was ordained May 22, 1738, and was well esteemed in his office until his decease in August, 1775, aged eighty. His

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 449, 450, 476.



brother, Russel Mason, their present pastor, was ordained November 2, 1752. General redemption had been so much held there, that they admitted members upon a general declaration of their faith, until a powerful work among them, in the beginning of 1772, introduced particular relations of the work of divine grace upon their souls; and light has greatly increased among them since. And in this late revival singing has been introduced in their public worship. The town of Rehoboth calls for our next attention. The Baptist church formed there under Mr. Comer's ministry<sup>1</sup> increased to ninety-five members in less than two years. But in 1736 a minister was ordained in his stead, whose principles were unsound; and six years after he took a whore instead of his wife, and went off with her. Since which, diversity of sentiments about doctrines, terms of communion, &c., have produced many small societies in that town, which I shall not attempt particularly to describe here, as a list of them may hereafter be given. The two Baptist churches in Attleborough were formed out of Separate churches there. The pastor of the church in Norton (mentioned in page 134) after a pious and useful life, fell asleep on August 23, 1768; after which the church united with a small society in the north borders of Taunton, where they are become a large society; and their present pastor was ordained November 12, 1772. In the year 1780 there was a most precious harvest of souls among them. No other Baptist churches in that county have had more than one pastor; and their names may hereafter be given.

The three counties last mentioned contain the whole of the ancient colony of Plymouth (the first in New England) excepting the few towns since set off to Rhode Island. The Colony of Massachusetts is the next before us, the head county whereof is Suffolk. The affairs of the two Baptist churches in Boston, their capital, have been described.<sup>2</sup> To which I shall add, that Mr. Condry was a gentleman of su-

<sup>1</sup>See p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>See Vol. I. pp. 285, 467, 483; Vol. II. pp. 32, 53, 170, 176.

perior powers and learning, and of a very respectable character; but the sentiments he had imbibed about the doctrines of sovereign grace, impeded his public usefulness in the ministry; and upon the instalment of their present pastor, January 9, 1765, he freely resigned his office in that church. The present pastor of their second church succeeded Mr. Davis in 1774. The next Baptist church in that county is in Bellingham, which was constituted October 15, 1750. Their first pastor was Mr. Elnathan Wight, a pious and useful man, who died in November, 1761. To him succeeded their present pastor, who was installed there, November 12, 1766. He was first ordained at Stafford, June 5, 1755; but was dismissed from thence by the advice of a Council, August 28, 1765, because the majority of the church appeared to be so much out of a gospel line of travel, that other churches withdrew their fellowship from them. The rest of the Baptist churches in that county have had no more than one minister. In Essex, beside the church of Haverhill, of which we have spoken,<sup>1</sup> Baptist meetings are held at Danvers, Rowley, and Methuen. In Middlesex, the church whereof Mr. Draper was pastor in Cambridge<sup>2</sup> dissolved after he left them, and the time of the constitution of our present church there may be hereafter seen. Mr. Elisha Rich was the first pastor of our Chelmsford church, who was ordained there October 5, 1774, but he removed into the State of Vermont near four years after. Their present pastor was ordained September 24, 1783. Baptist meetings are steadily held at Framingham and Weston, but churches are not formed there.<sup>3</sup>

In Worcester county, the church at Sutton, mentioned in page 31, was become small when their aged pastor died, January 4, 1775, and they are since dissolved. The second Baptist church there settled a minister in 1768, who was dismissed four years after for not being sound in the faith. Elder Green, of Leicester, after a very laborious and use-

<sup>1</sup>See p. 138.<sup>2</sup>See p. 79.<sup>3</sup>See p. 98, note.—Ed.

ful life, was taken to his rest August 20, 1773, aged seventy-three. Benjamin Foster, A. M., educated at Yale College, was ordained there October 23, 1776, and an evident blessing attended his labors for a considerable time. But differences about some points of practice arising among them, he was dismissed by mutual consent, about six years after, and removed, and preaches to a new society in Danvers, his native place. The first pastor of the Baptist church in Sturbridge died in 1755, and they have gone through many trying scenes since, but have at present a prospect of settling an agreeable pastor soon. Mr. Samuel Dennis was ordained at Petersham in October, 1778, but he was taken from his beloved flock by death in April, 1783. The first pastor of South Brimfield church, in the county of Hampshire,<sup>1</sup> removed from thence to Nova Scotia, (though he came back afterward) and Mr. James Mellen was their second pastor, who is mentioned in pages 143, 144. Their present pastor was ordained November 11, 1773, when the church was very small and feeble, but a great blessing has been since granted there. They had but twenty-three members in the church before a revival began among them in 1779, which in their letter to our Association, in September that year, was thus described; viz:—

Dear brethren, we have to inform you, that by the grace of God we are at peace among ourselves, and enjoy much of that love which passeth knowledge. The Lord, of his mercy, is come down among us, by his great and mighty power. Such solemn meetings we never had before; it comes like the showers of rain upon the mown grass. O the agonies of soul that some feel, and the joys that some are full and more than full of! It seems as if heaven was come down here. Numbers are born of the Spirit, and feel the sweet liberty of the gospel. O the solemn cries for the salvation of sinners! O the amazing joys we feel! Never, never did we before see such a happy day! May the Lord have all the glory. O that it may spread through all the earth! Through divine goodness it does spread more and more. Brethren, pray for us. Some who a few weeks ago seemed the most stupid, are now speaking freely of their amazing joys, and beholding their bleeding and very precious Redeemer. The work is so

<sup>1</sup>See p. 31.



great that we cannot consent to our elder's meeting you in Association this year. We have this year thirty-four added by baptism; our whole number is fifty-seven.

From our sister church in Wilbraham, adjacent to them, they wrote at the same time and said:—

We pray God to direct you in conferring upon matters that concern the visible kingdom of Christ, and do that which may be for his glory, and the lasting peace and benefit of his churches. Beloved, the love of Christ, that bond of peace, still unites our hearts. God, of his infinite grace and goodness, is carrying on a glorious work by his Spirit. Saints are quickened thereby, and sinners are converted to him. It is wonderful to behold the change that has been in the space of one year with us. The hearts of fathers are turned to the children, and the children to the fathers. God is to us a place of broad rivers; we desire to exalt him, and give him all the glory. . . . Added to the church this year fifty-one; died, none. Our present number is one hundred and thirty-three.

An elder from Berkshire county wrote August 29, 1779, and said:—

I snatch a moment to acknowledge the debt of love. I read the refreshing lines from you, and rejoice in your prosperity. May Zion's King enlarge her borders. It is a most remarkable time of the work of our God in New Providence,<sup>1</sup> Lanesborough, Hancock, New Lebanon, Little Hoosac, and some other places. In the fore part of June, at Shaftsbury, I baptized twenty-nine in one day. At Wallomstock<sup>2</sup> I attended the ordination of Elder Wait, and had a charming interview with Elder Gano. In a few weeks past I have baptized thirty-two, who have joined to our church. Elder Mason has baptized perhaps near thirty more, and a number have declared what God has done for them, that are not yet baptized. O brethren help us to praise the God of love!

From Ashfield they wrote in September, 1780, and said:—

The Lord has been pleased to pour out of his Spirit abundantly in this place, to the quickening of his children, and the conviction and conversion of many souls, as we, in a judgment of charity, have reason to believe. O help us to praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men, and to us in particular! . . . . We have had the addition of nine members by letters, and thirty-six by baptism; have dismissed two to the church in Coleraine, and excluded one. Our present number is ninety-four.

<sup>1</sup>Now part of the town of Adams.

<sup>2</sup>Near where the Bennington battle was.

And in all the churches and members that were added to the Warren Association in 1780, there was an increase of seven hundred and ninety-six members. Ninety were added to the church in South Brimfield alone, which formerly had passed through many and sore trials. And from a minister in the State of New Hampshire, to whom I wrote, I received the following remarkable account, dated March 15, 1781. Says he :—

I rejoice, Sir, to hear that in the midst of judgment, God is remembering mercy, and calling in his elect, from east to west. You have refreshed my mind with good news from the west and south, and in return I will inform you of good news from the north and east. Some hundreds of souls are hopefully converted in the counties of Rockingham, Stafford and Grafton, in New Hampshire, within about a year past. In the last journey I went, before my beloved wife was taken from me, I baptized seventy-two, men, women, and some that may properly be called children, who confessed with their mouths the salvation God had wrought in their hearts, to good satisfaction. Meredith, in Stafford [county], has a church gathered the year past, consisting of between sixty and seventy members. I baptized forty-three in that town in one day, and such a solemn weeping of the multitude on the shore I never before saw. The ordinance of baptism appeared to carry universal conviction through them, even to a man. The wife, when she saw her husband going forward, began to weep to think she was not worthy to go with him : in like manner the husband the wife, the parent the child, the children the parent ; that the lamentation and weeping methinks may be compared to the inhabitants of Hadadrimmon, in the valley of Magiddon. . . . Canterbury, in Rockingham county, has two Baptist churches gathered in the year past, one in the parish of Northfield ; the number I cannot tell, but it is considerably large : I baptized thirty-one there, and a number have been baptized since by others : the other is in the parish of Loudon, in said Canterbury, containing above a hundred members. . . . Another church of about fifty members is gathered in Chichester ; another in Barrington, consisting of a goodly number, and one in Hubbardston, all three in Stafford county. Two churches in Grafton county, one in Holderness, the other in Rumney. The church in Rumney had one Hains ordained last August, much to the satisfaction of the people. All these seven churches have been gathered in about a year past. . . . One church was gathered last fall in Wells, over which brother Nathaniel Lord, late of Berwick, is ordained. . . . There appears to be a general increase of the Baptist principles through all the eastern parts of New England.

A large part of those plantations, for a hundred and fifty miles upon our eastern shores, have no Congregational ministers. Near thirty incorporated towns in the county of Lincoln have scarce five such ministers settled in them. But I have received the following entertaining account of the revival of religion in those parts.

A man who was born there, and was about ten years old when such a noise was made against Mr. Whitefield, as we have described in page 75, says :—

I was then convinced that neither myself, nor those men who spake with so much spite and malice, were the children of God ; and I was rationally convinced that those they spake against were his children, although they called them deluded, possessed with the devil, Highflyers and Newlights ; and though they spake it as a scandal, yet I believed I must know that light or perish in darkness ; and I still retained a selfish or legal love to those people, though never so much despised. And from that time until I was twenty-six years old, the Spirit of God was striving with me, by awakening my conscience, convincing me of sin, and that I must be born again. And so I went on sinning and repenting, reforming and forgetting, looking upon God to be such a God as I would have him to be ; in hopes, that for what good there was in me, he would shew mercy to me. But when about twenty-six years of age, and my affections much set upon the things of the world, just about the time I was married, I was suddenly taken down with sickness, and part of the time deprived of reason ; and those who saw me despaired of my recovery. But, glory be to God, he dealt not with me according to my deserts, but according to his rich love and free grace in Jesus Christ ; for he enlightened my understanding, and awakened my conscience, and set my sins in order before me, and that which I had forgotten came all to memory, with the breach of many vows and promises, which grieved me to the heart as I thought. O, I cried to God to forgive my sins, and to shew mercy for Christ's sake ; for I saw myself a condemned sinner, and told those who came to discourse with me about religious matters, that I saw myself to be the greatest sinner of all men ; and had I owned all this globe, I would have given it all for an interest in Christ. Yea, all the men upon earth could not have persuaded me out of the opinion that I was more willing to receive Christ than he was to receive me. But it pleased the Lord, in about a month, to raise me up to a considerable state of bodily health, with a great earnestness, as I thought, to seek and serve him ; reading the Scriptures often, praying in secret and in my family, exhorting many others to seek and serve God, and warning them against evil practices. Yet in all this I did not think I was born again, neither did



I think I could do anything of myself to forward the work of regeneration; and here I got clear of one false hope, and began to build upon another; now I put great dependence in my non-dependence, and so went on with my reformation, thinking all the good I did that it was God who wrought it in me, and the evil came from the devil and my own corrupt nature; and this hope gave me great joy in my good performances, but great grief, guilt and repentance, for the commission of any known sin, or the omission of any known duty; and so I went on for ten or twelve years, and after that I grew more engaged after the treasures of the world, and then my delight in religion died away. . . . At length I began to think I was blind, and ignorant both of my own miserable estate, and of the remedy God had provided. I prayed that God would enlighten my understanding; but still I grew more blind, ignorant and wicked, as I thought, but kept it to myself, till at last I got hedged up so that I could neither read nor pray, which lasted but a short time. This was a Sabbath morning, September 30, 1781. . . . Now I began to see the base views I formerly had of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the plan of salvation; for when I had a discovery of actual sins, and the danger I was exposed to thereby, I would repent and reform, and think what a glorious Saviour Christ was, and that some time or other he would save me from hell, and take me to glory, with a desire to be happy, but no desire to be holy. But, glory be to God, he now gave me another view of salvation; now I saw his law to be holy, and loved it, though I and all my conduct was condemned by it. Now I saw that God's justice did not strike against me as his creature, but as a sinner, and that Christ died not only to save from punishment, but from sin itself. I saw that Christ's office was not only to make men happy, but to make them holy, and the plan now looked beautiful to me; I had no desire to have the least tittle of it altered, but all my cry was to be conformed to it. . . . On October 3, the load of guilt and condemnation was instantly removed, and my soul was filled with joy and peace. Then it was asked me, could I desire anything more? And at first I saw no want, till I found a want of love and gratitude in me to return thanks to God for this great deliverance, which I began to cry and plead for; and those words were spoken to me, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend; which came with such light, life, love and power, that I knew it to be the voice of my blessed Jesus, who by his Holy Spirit set that glorious seal to my soul that God is true; and now, by his grace, I could speak forth redeeming love and free grace without dread or fear. At this time there was no work or moving of religion among us, or round about us.

But he was constrained to go and visit his neighbors from house to house, and to lay open to them the vast concerns of

the soul and eternity, whereby many were awakened, and a large number have been hopefully converted since. Two new Baptist churches have been formed in this year, and there is a prospect of greater and more extensive blessings in those new plantations.





## CHAPTER XXIX.

OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE COUNTY OF PROVIDENCE.—IN NEW-PORT COUNTY.—AND WESTWARD FROM THENCE.—THE FOLLY OF MAN EXPOSED.—EVEN AMONG ALL SECTS.—HOW TRUTH IS HELD IN UN-RIGHTEOUSNESS.—BY THE SHAKERS AS WELL AS OTHERS.—THE ONLY REMEDY AGAINST DELUSIONS, AND MEASURE OF OUR REAL HAPPINESS, IS A HEARTY OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S REVEALED WILL.

When we turn our eyes westward, and take a view of the first Baptist church in America, the folly of man and the goodness of God appear very conspicuous therein. The learned Mr. Callender, in his Century Sermon, expressed some scruple whether Mr. Roger Williams, the founder of that town and colony, was ever a member of that church, or not. But he was convinced of this mistake afterwards.<sup>1</sup> Governor Winthrop, the most ingenuous and upright writer of any at Boston in that day, whose writings have come down to us, dates the beginning of the Baptist church in Providence in March, 1639, and says it began by Ezekiel Holliman's baptizing Mr. Williams, and then he baptizing the rest. But that in July after, the opinion mentioned in page 3 put a stop to his further travel with them. And Richard Scott, who was one of them, says two or three of the church withdrew with Williams.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Olney was their next minister. But the diversity of sentiments mentioned in this volume, pages 1—4, brought such darkness over their affairs, that no regular records before 1770

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I. p. 357.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>See Vol. I. pp. 86-89.

are now found therein. Their ancient fathers, Olney, Dexter, Wickenden, Tillinghast and others, could write well, as their civil records and some private papers witness; and I cannot but hope that more distinct accounts of their religious affairs will hereafter be discovered. Elder Tillinghast, whose memory is precious,<sup>1</sup> plainly told his people their duty to future ministers; but himself was so far from being chargeable to them, that he gave the lot upon which their first meeting-house was built. He died in a good old age, in 1718, and his posterity are now numerous and respectable. Mr. Ebenezer Jencks, brother to the Governor, was a pastor of that church from 1719, to his decease in 1726, colleague with Elder James Brown.<sup>2</sup> And their two families have, in late years, done the most of any families upon earth for the promotion of learning and the Baptist cause in Providence. Elder Winsor, there mentioned, continued in that office until his death in 1758, aged eighty-one. Elder Thomas Burlingham was a colleague with him, and died in 1770, aged eighty-two. Elder Winsor's son Samuel succeeded him in the care of the church in Providence, from 1759 until 1771, when he and a minor part of the church drew off, on account of differing sentiments concerning the doctrines of grace, and singing in public worship, then introduced, (which was a return to the first principles of the church) and he and his followers formed another church in Johnston. One of the two churches in Smithfield (mentioned in page 28) is dissolved: Elder John Winsor officiates in the other, where Elder Place did; but I have not been favored with any distinct account of their affairs, nor of those of the church in Scituate, where Elder Hopkins succeeds Elder Fisk. The like is to be said of the church in Cumberland, where Elder Ballou succeeds Elder Cooke. These three churches hold to general redemption, and make laying on of hands a term of their communion. But Elder Joseph Winsor, son to the first Elder Winsor in

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 16, 22.<sup>2</sup>See p. 23.

Providence, who succeeds Elder Thomas Knowlton in Gloucester, is in full fellowship with our churches. And so is Elder Rufus Tift, who was ordained in North Providence June 16, 1784, successor to Elder Ezekiel Angell, who died September 27, 1780.

Of the ministers of the First and Second churches in Newport, we have before spoken.<sup>1</sup> The learned Mr. Callender died there January 26, 1748; and Mr. Upham's society at Springfield being small, he was prevailed with to remove to Newport the next year, where he ministered the chief of his time until 1771, when he returned to his flock at Springfield, whom he had often visited in the mean time. And Mr. Kelly, from Philadelphia, was ordained pastor of the first church in Newport, October 9, 1771; and though the war caused his removal from them, yet he has since returned to them again. Elder Wightman, of the Second church there, died August 31, 1750, aged eighty-two. Elder Eyres was taken from them February 13, 1759, aged sixty-eight; and their present pastor, who had often preached to them before, was ordained the twenty-ninth of April following. He was almost the only dissenting minister who continued to preach on the island through all the distressing season of its being possessed by the enemy; and he has had a precious harvest of souls there since. The Third church in Newport, which keeps the seventh day, began under the ministry of Mr. William Hiscox in 1671, who continued their pastor until his death, May 24, 1704, aged sixty-six. Elder William Gibson from London was his successor, and died March 12, 1717, aged seventy-nine. Elder Joseph Crandall had been a colleague with him for two years, and continued their minister until he died, September 13, 1737. Elder John Maxson was their next minister, from 1754 until his decease, March 2, 1778. Mr. Ebenezer David (who was converted in Providence College, and took his first degree there in 1772) belonged to this church; and having been a

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 15, 16, 29.



chaplain much esteemed in our army, died therein not far from Philadelphia, a few days after Mr. Maxson. Their present pastor was ordained a colleague with him.

The church in Dartmouth (mentioned in Vol. I. pages 454, 505) now have their meeting-house and the majority of their members within the bounds of Tiverton. Elder Tabor died in 1752; after which they had Elder David Round for their minister a number of years, and some others; but it was a dark, trying time with them, until a late remarkable revival was granted. Their present pastor is from Newport. He removed there in the spring of 1775, but labored under many discouragements for five years; and then heavy afflictions were made to work for good to him and his people. He was ordained April 13, 1780, and much of a spirit of prayer was granted for the revival of religion; which prayers were answered in such a manner, that betwixt the first of June that year, and June 27, 1781, ninety members were added to that church. In which time say they, "We have seen as it were many Pentecost days, and enjoyed heaven upon earth. All glory to God forever and ever. The subjects of the work seem to be of all ages, from fifteen to sixty, and all circumstances of life. They tell clear experiences of a work of grace; and some who have been professors several years can now tell something like a new conversion."

When we pass over the Narragansett Bay, I perceive that the church in South Kingstown (mentioned in page 28) has long been dissolved; those in North Kingstown and Warwick continue, but my intelligence concerning them is too imperfect to be of any service to the public. The like may be said concerning the Seventy-day church at Westerly and Hopkinton which continued to act as one church with their brethren of Newport, until they were regularly dismissed therefrom in 1708. The church in the west part of Warwick, where Elder Worden was ordained,<sup>1</sup> is dissolved; and

<sup>1</sup>See p. 79.

after he had preached for some time to the church in Coventry (mentioned in page 105) many of them removed to the place where he is now settled in Berkshire county. The west part of Coventry, with the adjacent borders of Scituate and Foster, had scarcely the appearance of religion among them, until Elder Nichols was raised up, and made instrumental of a very considerable reformation in those parts. Elder David Sprague died in Exeter, in 1777, and his son before and since has been made a very useful man there. Oliver Babcock, succeeded his father in office at Westerly. Elder Wightman's son is his successor in Groton. The church at New London<sup>1</sup> is dissolved, by means of the ill-conduct of their minister. The pious Elder Merriman died at Southington, last winter, aged eighty-eight. Such a revival of religion was granted in Woodstock, in 1780, as added ninety members to the Baptist church there, in less than two years. To the honor of Governor Trumbull it is to be remembered, that he has repeatedly interposed his influence in favor of that society, to relieve them when taxed to the worship of their opponents. The present Baptist minister of Suffield was ordained in 1775; and such a blessing was granted upon his labors, that their church increased in about a year from sixty to two hundred members. And our principles prevail more and more in all parts of the country; so that we may truly adopt the language of Moses's prophetic song, For their rock is not our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. They have often declared that their ministers and churches would come down, if they were not supported by compulsion. They have now tried that power against us, and to support themselves, until it plainly fails them, while our rock stands firm. Let all the glory be given to God therefor. We are so far from deserving any part of it, that like babes we have need again to be taught which are the first principles of the oracles of God.

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 519.

Let us take a brief view of those principles, and of the folly of man in departing from them. If we pay any regard to the word of Christ, we must know, that no man can see his kingdom, nor have right to any power therein, without regeneration; and also that all striving about who shall be the greatest is excluded therefrom. John i. 12, 13; iii. 3; Matt. xviii. 1—4; xx. 25—28. Agreeably to this, the fathers of New England were taught as follows:—

As the kingdom of Christ is not of this world (John xviii. 36) but spiritual, and he a spiritual king; so must the government of this spiritual kingdom, under this spiritual king, needs be spiritual, and all the laws of it. And as Christ Jesus hath, by the merits of his priesthood, redeemed as well the body as the soul, (I Cor. vi. 20), so is he also, by the sceptre of his kingdom, to rule and reign over both. Unto which Christian magistrates, as well as meaner persons, ought to submit themselves; and the more Christian they are, the more meekly to take the yoke of Christ upon them; and the greater authority they have, the more effectually to advance his sceptre over themselves and their people by all good means. Neither can there be any reason given, why the merits of saints may not as well be mingled with the merits of Christ for the saving of his church, as the laws of men with his laws for the ruling and guiding of it. He is as absolute and [as] entire a king as he is a priest, and his people must be as careful to preserve the dignity of the one, as to enjoy the benefit of the other.<sup>1</sup>

And as the teachers in the church of England continued to call baptism regeneration, as Origen did, and yet the author against whom Mr. Robinson wrote, told of his begetting many of his hearers in Christ by his preaching, Robinson said to him:—

Their baptism was true baptism, and so the true seal of their forgiveness of sins, and new birth, as you affirm, p. 119, and this their seal of the new birth hath stood good upon them all this while, visibly and externally; and yet, after all this, you preach unto them and beget them anew, visibly and externally (for only God knoweth that which is true within.) You have begotten [begot] them through the gospel. Behold a monstrous generation! a man begetting children twenty, thirty or forty years after they be born! If Nicodemus had heard of this, he might well have said, How can these things be.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Robinson against Bernard, p. 38. [Works of John Robinson, Vol. II, p. 40.]

<sup>2</sup>Robinson against Bernard, preface, pp. 11, 12. [Works of John Robinson, Vol. II, p. 11.]



And how is the folly of others also now exposed in our land? In 1638, the year Harvard College was founded, a law was made at Boston, to empower the voters in each town (which then were only the communicants in their churches) to compel every inhabitant therein to contribute proportionally with others, “for upholding the ordinances in the churches, whereof he doth or may receive benefit.” And because a man wrote some arguments against this practice, he was fined ten pounds; and another was fined forty shillings, only for reading the same before company; and the ministers said such men were “rather to be taught by cudgel than argument.”<sup>1</sup> But how is their folly now made manifest unto all men, according to God’s promise? II Tim. iii. 5—9. Corrupt ministers have done the most to promote infidelity and a contempt of revealed religion of any men upon earth. After these things had broken forth in the nation most terribly, in and after the reign of Charles the Second, bishop Burnet said:—

I am forced to declare, that having had much free conversation with many that have been fatally corrupted that way, they have very often owned to me, that nothing promoted this so much in them, as the very bad opinion which they took up of all clergymen of all sides. They did not see in them that strictness of life, that contempt of the world, that zeal, that meekness, humility and charity, that diligence and earnestness, with relation to the truths of the Christian religion, which they reckoned they would most certainly have, if they themselves firmly believed it. Therefore they concluded, that those whose business it was more strictly to enquire into the truth of their religion, knew that it was not so certain as they themselves, for other ends, endeavored to make the world believe it was. And that, though for carrying on of their own authority or fortunes, which in one word they call their *trade*, they seemed to be very positive in affirming the truth of their doctrines; yet they in their own hearts did not believe it, since they lived so little answerable to it, and were so much set on raising themselves by it; and so little on advancing the honor of their profession, by an exemplary piety and shining conversation. This (says Burnet) is a thing not to be answered by being angry at them for saying it, or by reproaching such as repeat it, as if they were enemies to the

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 79, 81.

church ; these words of heat and faction signify nothing to work upon or convince any.<sup>1</sup>

And he well observes, that a real reformation is the only effectual remedy. And such a door is now opened for an extensive reformation, as never has been before among any people since the rise of antichrist. He rose and has prevailed by the connection of the officers of church and State together, so as to level the terrors both of this and the future world against all that attempted to resist their power. But how is that connection now broken ! A learned gentleman in the law, published an answer last January, to the minister mentioned in page 248, who tells him plainly :—

A church hath a right, beyond all obligation that human laws can lay upon them, to dismiss their pastor when they please. Churches may advise churches, and members may reason with members ; but to advise will always suppose, that the advice may be accepted or rejected ; and should it be rejected, I know not to what earthly tribunal the pastor, as pastor, could repair with his complaint against his church. . . . The first principle in a religious body is, that they will act according to the dictates of a good conscience, advising, not controlling one another. There is nothing more plain than that when they consent to do that which their consciences disapprove, they do not act as a religious society.<sup>2</sup>

This is a most important truth, but how little is it regarded.

Can the conscience of any man approve of his taking away the property of another for nothing ? or requiring him to do much service for a community, without any support or reward ? Christ says, The laborer is worthy of his reward ; and his command is, Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things. Be not deceived ; God is not mocked. Yet how many are there at this day that make high pretences of regard to a free gospel, and at the same time treat those whom they applaud as true teachers of it worse than they do their oxen ? not only neglect to communicate good things to them

<sup>1</sup>Preface to his Pastoral Care, 1692, pp. 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup>Strictures upon Thatcher, by J. S., pp. 19, 22.

themselves, but hinder others from doing of it. Such an instance has been described in page 23. And there are persons now in all parts of the land, who are ready to spit their venom, and if possible to ruin the characters of all teachers who will not either be tyrants or slaves; either be confederate in forcing away the property of people for nothing, and worse than nothing, or else spend their lives and strength for the good of souls, and receive nothing from them but empty words. The great design of religion is to make men just and merciful; but how opposite thereto is it, to set a man up in a public and expensive office, exposed to the resentment of earth and hell, and require him to go this warfare of his own charges! I Cor. ix. 7—14. Can any wonder if a curse is sent upon the blessings of men who refuse to lay these things to heart? Mal. ii. 2; iii. 9, 10. Truth and love bring teachers and members to act in union, and to regard each other's case as their own, which a precious number do in our day; but pride and covetousness cause divisions and offences, contrary thereto; and all such are to be marked and avoided. Those in general who have made use of secular force in religious matters have been such schismatics,<sup>1</sup> neither can others be free of that guilt, who lay heavy service and burthens upon their officers, and will not touch them with one of their fingers. The time is coming when the vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl bountiful; but the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand. Is. xxxii. 5—8. Nearly or quite half of the expense of the sitting of the Legislatures, both of Massachusetts and Connecticut, ever since they have supported ministers by tax, (except in the late time of war) has been to contrive how to take and give property that they had no more right to meddle with, than they had to appoint some men to make a weekly feast in each town, and compel all to pay for it, whether they liked it or not;

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 484.



yea, although they discovered poison therein. For worse poison for bodies was never found upon earth, than a great deal of the teaching thus paid for in our land is to the souls of men. The apostle speaks of oppositions of science falsely so called, and of those who hold the truth in unrighteousness; and perhaps the following are instances of it.

That Christianity is essentially necessary to the good order of civil society, is a certain truth;<sup>1</sup> but men hold it in unrighteousness, when they assume a power to add to Christ's laws about his worship. Pretenders to new, immediate revelations do this as really as State politicians. Special teachings of the Holy Spirit we all need continually, to give us a right understanding of the Holy Scriptures, so as to apply and obey them in a right manner; but they are perfect in themselves, and sufficient to furnish the man of God for every good work, when he takes the apostles as the true expounders of the prophets. On this foundation the Christian church was built. Eph. ii. 19, 20. And though confounding them together produced Mystery, Babylon, yet, when she shall be destroyed that order will be again observed. Rev. xviii. 20. Their writings, with the united church of believing Jews and Gentiles built thereon, appear to be the two witnesses mentioned in Rev. xi. 3—15. Directly after their resurrection, the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of Christ; which undoubtedly intends an entire submission to his laws and government. Reference is there had to Zech. iv. 11—14, which speaks of one candlestick, of two olive trees, and of golden oil communicated into it through them. There was then but one church; but after the partition wall betwixt Jews and Gentiles was broken down, both have access by one spirit unto the Father; which spirit is plainly the golden oil communicated to souls through the word of truth. This united church is the light of the world, and the pillar and ground of the truth. Matt. v. 14;

<sup>1</sup>See p. 228.

I Tim. iii. 15. The chief disputes in the world have been whether God's revealed mind is strictly true? or if true, how it can be equal? The apostles and prophets, and all hearty believers of their writings, have ever witnessed for both of these points; but it has long been in sackcloth or mourning. And perhaps when they are killed, and yet the people will not permit them to be buried, means, when officers become so corrupt that truth falls in the street, and equity cannot enter, though the people will not entirely part therewith. Hereupon Jehovah will arise and render vengeance to his enemies according to their deeds, yea, recompense to the islands. After which the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob; who will be established in a way of covenant obedience to the words of his mouth, by the influence of his Spirit. This prophecy the apostle applies to future times, which will be as life from the dead. Is. lix. 14—21; Rom. xi. 15, 26. Again, because it is a most important truth that God is no respecter of persons, many deny his right to do what he will with his own grace, though in a way of perfect justice. He is perfectly just in all his dispensations, while he shews mercy to whom he will shew mercy. To deny this is to deny him the right which every freeman has with his own property. Oh, madness! It is also an essential truth, that God is *love* in the abstract; but it is a fatal delusion to imagine that he loves every individual sinner, so as not to inflict endless punishment upon such as die in impenitency. The devils are his creatures, and were a higher order of them than men; yet their endless punishment is declared as one evidence against those who turn grace into lasciviousness. Jude 6. Again, Christ's finished atonement is the object of faith, and all our encouragement to come to God by him, is ever to be derived from the record thereof given in the gospel, which is as true before we believe it as afterwards; but it is a most deceitful trick to argue from thence, that the true believer is not conscious of an inward change in his

soul, so as to be enabled to do such acts, as are well pleasing to God. Heb. xiii. 16. When any in Israel were bitten with the fiery serpents, all hope of life was cut off, save only from an object without and above them, to which each of them must look, or death was his portion; yet when he looked, a change was wrought within him; the poison was expelled, and health recovered; and it would have been a wicked thing in any of them not to rejoice and be thankful therefor. Now Christ himself explains faith and regeneration hereby. John iii. 14, 15. Yet Robert Sandeman, and James Relly after him, have poisoned the souls of many with artful representations that it is pharisaical pride for any to tell of inward experiences, and to rejoice in what God has done within them. And the latter of them, by deceitfully representing that our own interest is part of the first object of faith, has carried his argument in many minds, that every individual will finally be saved, because if it were not so, it could not be a crime not to believe a point which was not true in fact. Whereas in the passage that he builds most upon, a not believing the record as it stands in the book is the crime charged; and life is there declared to be in the Son, and given to us, and also that none have life but those who have that gift. I John v. 10—12. Now compare this with Christ's own words concerning the brazen serpent, and Relly's argument appears as false as it would to have argued that it could not have been a crime for a poisoned person to refuse a look to it, unless healing was as certainly his before as afterwards: no crime to make light of the gospel call, unless the feast they are called to is certainly theirs, and they may come to it when they please; and that God's infinite love obliges him to receive them whenever they shall cry for it in good earnest. Matt. xxii. 1—4. The devil himself never preached worse doctrine than this, yet how many are strongly attached thereto!

Another essential truth of the gospel is, that we must daily deny ourselves and take up our cross, or we cannot be



Christ's disciples, But this truth has often been held in unrighteousness in every age. The people, mentioned in page 111, ran to a great length in that way. A man from Charlestown, near Boston, was their head, who, about 1758, assumed God's essential prerogatives in such a blasphemous manner, that he was complained of to authority, upon which he fled, and his followers concealed him for many years, and a house was built for that purpose in Harvard, where they privately resorted to him; and he declared himself to be perfect and immortal, until death arrested him, and he was buried with great secrecy. Since which the same house in Harvard has been made the headquarters of a small company from Britain, who have a woman for their head. They privately got together in the county of Albany, and formed their scheme; and then in April, 1780, it was suddenly proclaimed, that a new dispensation was begun, greater than had ever been known in the world before, which all were called to enter into, or they could not be saved. A Pædobaptist minister in New Lebanon, New York, and a Baptist minister in Pittsfield, fell into the snare; and many hundreds were drawn into it, in various parts of Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Connecticut. The said Baptist minister in Pittsfield, after being a few months with them, was delivered from that delusion, and published an account of their scheme, which was printed at Hartford, Norwich, Providence and Boston. I was at his house in June, 1782, and went with him to visit a considerable number of them. They earnestly inculcate that doctrine of devils of forbidding to marry, and require so much bodily exercise, in singing and dancing, &c., as has destroyed the health and even the lives of some; a cruel cross indeed! while their chief leaders delight themselves much in feasting and drinking spirituous liquor. I would by no means misrepresent any of their sentiments or conduct; but I have obtained most certain evidence that these seven abominations constitute the essence of their scheme. 1. They hold an earthly head to

their church. 2. That out of it is no salvation. 3. That the only way into it is by confessing even secret sins to them. 4. That when any have so done, they must believe as the church believes, and do as they say. 5. They teach *Do and live*. 6. Their doings are unnatural and violent. 7. They endeavor to enforce and propagate their scheme with a strange power, signs and lying wonders. Some of them at Norton and elsewhere have carried matters so far this year, as for men and women to dance together entirely naked, to imitate the primitive state of perfection. And their forcibly stripping a woman of one of their families, who testified against their wickedness, has moved the authority of Bristol county lately to take them in hand therefor. Forbidding men and their wives to lodge together is a point they are strenuous upon. But a number who were with them have renounced their delusions, and their party is evidently on the decline. And so is that of another company, of whom take the following concise account. Jemima Wilkinson, born among the Quakers in Cumberland, in the county of Providence, being a young woman of a retentive memory, and an eloquent tongue, declares that in October, 1776, she was not only taken sick but actually died, and her soul went to heaven; soon after which, she says, her body was reënimated by the spirit and power of Christ; upon which she set out as a public teacher, and for a while had large assemblies to hear her in various parts of the county of Bristol, and from thence westward to New London. Indeed she has travelled as far as Boston on one hand, and Philadelphia on the other; but her chief followers were within the above limits. A young man, who was an intimate counsellor of hers for some years, gives the following account of her, and of how he and other people were ensnared by her. He first heard her at Tiverton, in 1778, and says he:—

The first appearance seemed to be something singular and extraordinary, in a habit different from what is common amongst women, wearing her hair curled in her neck, without any other covering on her head, except

when she travelled out she put on a hat much like a man's, only with the brim down. Her visage a good deal bright, with a very agreeable countenance; her voice very grum and shrill for a woman, and seemed pathetic and engaging in her discourse, in which were abundance of Scripture expressions, though not much explained, or light held up from them; neither did I ever hear her advance much Scripture doctrine of the principles of religion; but her exhortation seemed to be very affecting, shewing a very sedate countenance with seriousness and solemnity, admonishing all to repent and forsake evil, and learn to do well, and live as they would wish to die. . . . And as the state of mankind at this day is much like the Athenians, that spent their time in nothing else but either to hear or tell some new thing, her coming forth as a preacher different from all other sects or denominations of people, being a woman of extraordinary natural abilities, speaking as an orator, of a great memory in the Scriptures, and having abundance of strange reports spread abroad concerning her, some false and some true, produce abundance of spectators and enquirers. And she appears zealously engaged, and says she devotes herself and service wholly to the glory of God, and the good of souls. She exhorts people in a pathetical manner, with great confidence and boldness; and says she has an immediate revelation for all she delivers; that she is the greatest minister that God has sent to the people these seventeen hundred and odd years; and advancing herself to live as she exhorts others to, fully in a state of perfection, with no liability of error or defect in any respect, seems to have great influence upon many serious people; for no one would rationally think that a person in their right senses would dare to hold forth and affirm such great and exalted things concerning themselves, unless it were so in reality.<sup>1</sup>

This is a brief view of the substance of his account of her way of proceeding, which brought a number of ignorant people, and some who have been officers in the State, to follow and cleave to her affectionately, as a person invested with immediate and great power from above, even power to work miracles. But her influence has not been half so great and extensive as that of the other woman mentioned; both of whose schemes are now dying away.

And thus I have pointed out some of the ways wherein men have gone a whoring with their own inventions. (Psal. cvi. 39) which is fixing their affections and dependence thereon, instead of the God of truth. And though it is

<sup>1</sup>Brownell upon Enthusiastical Errors, 1783, pp. 5—7.



a maxim with earthly politicians, that their king can do no wrong, thereby imputing all that is wrong to others, yet they have long taken the opposite course concerning the kingdom of Christ. All the frauds, oppressions and licentiousness, that have been practised under his name, have been cast upon Christianity itself; as if because men are false, therefore God is not true. Instead of owning his just authority, they have exalted themselves above him, and have arraigned his sayings at their bar. Rom. iii. 4. What he says concerning the entire depravity of man, and their enmity of heart against God, they make a chief argument against the truth of his sayings in his written word; and thus they plainly confirm the truth of it, by their arguments against it. And because errors and heresies more openly break out, where he has poured out his Spirit, than where people like Moab are settled upon their lees, many conclude that it was not his Spirit that moved upon the minds of the people; which argument is about as conclusive as it would be to say, that the influences of the sun are not really good in the spring and summer, because they cause a very disagreeable stench to arise from dunghills and dead carcasses, which we do not smell when the sun is at a great distance, and these things are hard frozen in the winter; or to say that the showers of heaven are not good, because they make the thorns to grow as well as the wheat. These reasoners often declare, that if we are entirely dependent upon the sovereign will of God, for renewing and saving grace, then all our use of means to attain salvation is in vain; but why do they use means for their bodies? If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that. Who were they that said a few years ago, "*We will bring America to our feet! We will not receive law from any power whatever!*" Where is their Governor who required us to submit to an *absolute* and *unlimited power* in man?<sup>1</sup> God's plan of government is absolutely perfect and immutable; and he has appointed the means and

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 189, 258.

the end, and the means in order to the end, in the moral as well as natural world. The means of grace are calculated in infinite wisdom to open the eyes of men, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Precepts and promises, rewards and punishments, calls and warnings, are all motives to influence the choice of man. And the strongest hold that the devil has in this world is to persuade man, that a being governed in his choice by motives without himself, is inconsistent with the liberty of moral agents; and to persuade him at the same time that necessity obliges God to pardon and save them, whenever they shall become sincere penitents. Thus they assume a sovereignty to themselves, which they deny to their Maker; and treat him as a servant, to whom they may say, Go thy way for this time, and when I have a convenient season I will call for thee; making his choice dependent upon theirs. If motives without us do not determine our choice, it would be impossible for God to govern us; and, as the excellent Edwards observes, Arminian principles truly involve in their nature the horrid blasphemy which they falsely cast upon the Calvinists, of charging God with acting a deceitful part towards men, in appointing the means of grace; for these are motives to determine their choice on the side of virtue, which he could not be sincere in appointing, if their choice is not determined by motives without themselves.<sup>1</sup> His immutable designs are so far from interfering with the liberty of moral agents, that where they are known, the believer dares not make them the rule of his conduct; and hereby subjects and rebels are distinguished. An express precept required Saul to destroy Agag, as well as the rest of the Amalekites; and by disobedience thereto he lost his kingdom and his soul. On the other hand, David knew that God designed to remove Saul, yet having no precept to kill him, he refused to do it, though much provoked thereto, when he had very convenient opportunities to cut

<sup>1</sup>Edwards on the Will, p. 266, third edition. [Edwards's Works, Vol. II, p. 117.]

him off. And though the prophet Samuel, by immediate direction from above, anointed David to be king over Israel, yet he never assumed that power but by their free choice and covenant; and when this was done by part of them, he made no use of their arms to compel others to receive him. And when ten tribes revolted from his grandson, who collected an army to bring them under him again, God warned him not to do it, and was obeyed therein. And if a power of will opposite to the Bible had not been dreadfully set up in latter ages, Mystery Babylon would not have been drunken with blood as she now is. A revelation to the Jews of God's design, that Jesus should die for that nation, did not at all lessen the guilt of those who thereupon took counsel together for to put him to death. John xi. 51—53. Obedience to what he requires of us, is the measure of our duty and felicity, without attempting to get into the place of the universal Ruler. At the same time no honest soul could be happy under his government, if he thought it possible for men or devils to deceive him, and to defeat his designs. And whether the whole history of this country, as well as others, does not demonstrate, that a hearty and unfeigned obedience to his revealed will is our wisdom as well as duty, and that all disobedience thereto is infinitely hateful and dreadful, is now freely referred to the reader's conscience.



## CHAPTER XXX.

THE NATURE OF COVENANTS EXPLAINED.—THE SENTIMENTS OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES ABOUT TERMS OF COMMUNION, THE POWER OF COUNCILS, AND THE NATURE AND PLACE OF HUMAN LEARNING.—A LIST OF THEIR CHURCHES IN NEW ENGLAND.

The word *Covenant*, when used concerning contracts between man and man, includes many ideas that can have no place in the affairs betwixt the creature and his Creator ; and so much darkness has appeared in controversies upon this subject, that some worthy men have thought it best to adopt the word *Testament* instead of *Covenant* in the latter case. But a review must convince us that we cannot get free of difficulties by this change of words ; because *Testament*, when used about a father's will who is absent from us, is essentially different from the will of God, who is ever present, and sees our inmost thoughts. Yet *Testament* ever means the will of the testator expressed, and also a free disposal of his property as he pleaseth ; which, when well ratified, is as good a title as any in the world, although it would spoil it for the legatees to have any hand in forming it. And mutual consent, with mutual obligations and privileges, are essential ideas in all covenants. *This do, and thou shalt live*, was the language of God to Adam in innocency, with which his heart concurred ; and this obligation to love is immutably binding upon all his children. Luke x. 27, 28. To withhold this obedience is to rob both God and man of their

right; and God justly requires every sinner to give again that he had robbed, and to walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity. And the new covenant is the writing the law of love in the believer's heart, which yields a free consent to it, in the tenor of *I will, and They shall*. Ezek. xxxiii. 15; Rom. viii. 3, 4; Heb. viii. 10, 11. All who have this work wrought within them ought to confess the same with their mouths, and to receive each other as Christ received them, to the glory of God. Says the apostle, They first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God. Rom. x. 10; xv. 7; II Cor. viii. 5. This is the exact nature of a church covenant; which shews that no person can be brought into it without his own consent, that the covenant cannot bind any person or community to act any thing contrary to the revealed will of God, nor ever exempt any from their obligation to act agreeably thereto with all their hearts.

Great imperfections still remain among us in these respects; yet it is thought best to exhibit to the world a list of the churches in New England who profess these principles, at least so far as not to allow that persons can be forced into religious covenants. A few of them admit some Pædobaptists to their communion, and it is but a few; neither can that practice last long, as our opponents know that practice speaks louder than words; and a noted minister and church in the county of Plymouth openly debarred one of their pious members from their communion last year, for no other crime than a being buried in baptism; by which act say they, "She has practically declared infant baptism a nullity, and this church to be a company of unbaptized persons." And the Separate churches in Connecticut published their terms of communion three years ago, which were these, viz.:—"As to our Baptist brethren, we are free to hold occasional communion with such as are regular churches, and make the Christian profession as above said, and acknowledge us

to be baptized churches," &c.<sup>1</sup> Hereby they confirm our terms of communion, as described on page 116. Our sentiments concerning the use and power of Councils are the same as those described by our fathers, in Volume I, pages 473, 474, and we refuse to hear any complaints of censured persons in our annual Associations, because that would imply jurisdiction over the churches, which we disclaim; and we hold that a Council freely chosen, and meeting near the place of difficulty or grievance, where a fair hearing of the parties concerned may be had, is the most rational and scriptural method of proceeding in such cases. Our sentiments about the nature and proper place of human learning are well expressed in Volume I, pages 487, 488. Confining the ministry to an education at college, as well as compelling people to support such, has produced infinite mischiefs in all ages, which could never have prevailed as they have, if cruel arts had not been made use of to keep the people in ignorance, and to prejudice their minds against true knowledge, both sacred and civil. The foundation for learning laid at Providence, (mentioned in page 137,) has suffered much in the late war, but the school appears now again in a promising way. All other colleges have been very expensive to governments, but this has never received any thing in that way, (no, not to repair damages which government has occasioned therein,) but personal generosity laid its foundation, and has been its support hitherto. Gentlemen of various denominations, chiefly in the town of Providence, subscribed above four thousand pounds therefor before the college edifice was erected in that town; and considerable sums have been given since, especially in the year past, to augment their library. And as liberal sentiments are taught therein, and persons of all denominations, whose civil and moral conduct is agreeable, have equal privileges for learning in it, liberal communications are earnestly solicited for the necessary support of this institution.

<sup>1</sup>Declaration of said churches, met at Killingly, September 19, 1781, p. 21.



A BRIEF VIEW OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN NEW ENGLAND, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST AND BEST ACCOUNTS THAT HAVE BEEN RECEIVED.

The first column contains the Year when each church was constituted, the second the Name of the Town, the third their Minister's Name, if they have any, and the fourth the Number of their Members, if that is known.

MASSACHUSETTS.—COUNTY OF SUFFOLK.

Year.	Town.	Ministers.	No.
1665	Boston,	Samuel Stillman, A. M.	158
1743		Isaac Skillman, A. M.	43
1750	Bellingham,	Noah Alden,	56
1769	Wrentham,	William Williams, A. M.	39
1776	Medfield,	Thomas Gair, A. M.	72
1780	Needham,	Noah Baker.	
1780	Stoughton,	Vacant.	

COUNTY OF BRISTOL.

1663	Swanzy,	Charles Thompson, A. M.	
1693		Russel Mason.	
1753	Rehoboth,	Nathan Peirce,	
1762		John Hicks,	100
1772		Jacob Hicks.	
1777		James Sheldon,	48
1780		Vacant.	
1761	Taunton,	William Nelson, A. M.	79
1769	Attleborough,	Job Seamans,	80
1781		Elisha Carpenter,	59
1772	Dighton,	Enoch Goff,	120
1774	Freetown,	Abner Lewis,	95
1781		David Seamans,	50
		Vacant.	
1774	Dartmouth,	Vacant,	19
1781		Daniel Hicks,	
1780	Raynham,	Vacant,	35

COUNTY OF PLYMOUTH.

1756	Middleborough,	Isaac Backus,	137
1757		Ebenezer Hinds,	70
1761		Asa Hunt,	194

COUNTY OF BARNSTABLE.<sup>1</sup>

Year.	Town.	Ministers.	No.
1757	Harwich,	Vacant,	43
1781		Samuel Nickerson.	
1771	Barnstable,	Vacant,	41

## COUNTY OF ESSEX.

1765	Haverhill,	Hezekiah Smith, A. M.,	190
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## COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX.

1771	Chelmsford,	Abishai Crossman,	87
1780	Newton,	Caleb Blood,	79
1781	Cambridge,	Thomas Green,	27

## DUKES COUNTY.

	Chilmark,	Silas Paul.	
1780	Tisbury,	Vacant,	79

## COUNTY OF WORCESTER.

1738	Leicester,	Vacant,	70
1749	Sturbridge,	Jordan Dodge,	53
1762	Charlton,	Nathaniel Green,	155
1765	Sutton,	Ebenezer Lamson,	78
1767	Grafton,	Elkanah Ingalls,	38
1768	Petersham,	Vacant.	
1770	Royalston,	Whitman Jacobs,	89
1774	Douglass,	Vacant.	
1775	Dudley,	Vacant,	33
1776	Harvard,	Isaiah Parker,	110
1779	Ashburnham,	Vacant,	37
1780	Northbridge,	Vacant,	25
1782	Templeton,	John Sellon,	23

## COUNTY OF HAMPSHIRE.

1736	South Brimfield,	Elijah Coddington,	236
1740	West Springfield,	Edward Upham, A. M.	
1761	Ashfield,	Ebenezer Smith,	90
1762	Granby,	James Smith.	
1765	Montague,	Vacant,	32
1768	Wilbraham,	Seth Clark,	159
1772	New Salem,	Samuel Bigelow,	35
1780	Shutesbury,	William Ewing.	
1780	Colerain,	Vacant,	26
1780	Bernardston,	Joseph Green,	50
1780	Chesterfield,	Vacant.	

<sup>1</sup>The churches in Barnstable county, and the third in Freetown, were omitted by Mr. Backus in his list, but given in a note at its close.—ED.

## COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE.

Year.	Town.	Ministers.	No.
1769	Adams,	Peter Worden,	133
1771	Lanesborough,	Nathan Mason,	150
1772	Pittsfield,	Valentine Rathbun,	15
1772	Hancock,	Clark Rogers,	85
1777	Washington,	Vacant.	
1779	Sandisfield,	Joshua Morse,	30
	Alford,	Jacob Drake.	
1781	West Stockbridge,	Elnathan Wilcox,	15

## COUNTY OF YORK.

1768	Berwick,	William Hooper,	53
1772	Sanford,	Vacant.	
	Wells,	Nathaniel Lord,	56
1782	Coxhall,	Simon Lock,	32

## COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND.

1768	Gorham,	Vacant.	
1782	New Gloucester,	Vacant.	

## COUNTY OF LINCOLN.

1784	Bowdoinham,	Job Macomber,	27
1784	Thomaston,	Isaac Case,	50

## NEW HAMPSHIRE.

1755	Newton,	Vacant.	
1770	Richmond,	Matturean Ballou,	122
1771	Lebauon,	Vacant,	12
1771	Westmoreland,	Ebenezer Baily.	
1771	Brentwood,	Samuel Shepard,	156
1771	Deerfield,	Elipheleth Smith.	
1772	Gilmanton,	Vacant,	30
1777	Marlow,	Eleazer Beckwith.	
1778	Croydon,	Vacant,	22
1779	Canterbury,	Vacant.	
1780		Vacant.	
1780	Northwood,	Edmund Pillsbury,	44
1780	Salem,	Samuel Fletcher,	60
1780	Rumney,	[Cotton] Hains.	
1780	Holderness,	Vacant.	
1780	Meredith,	Nicholas Folsom.	
1780	Chichester,	Vacant.	
1780	Barrington,	Vacant.	
1780	Hubbardston,	Vacant.	
1782	New Hampton,	Jeremiah Ward.	



Year.	Town.	Ministers.	No.
1782	Perryston,	Samuel Ambrose.	
1782	Temple,	Vacant.	
1782	Savil,	Vacant,	12
1783	Weare,	Vacant.	
1783	Canaan,	Thomas Baldwin,	18

## CONNECTICUT.—COUNTY OF HARTFORD.

1739	Southington,	Vacant,	18
1743	Colchester,	Vacant.	
1755	Stafford,	Vacant.	
1760	Enfield,	Vacant.	
1775	Suffield,	John Hastings.	
1780	Coventry,	Vacant.	
	Farmington,	John Davis.	
1783	Chatham,	Solomon Wheat.	

## COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD.

1751	Stratfield,	Seth Higby.	
1773	Stamford,	Elkanah Holmes.	
1773	Greenwich,	Vacant.	

## COUNTY OF NEW LONDON.

1705	Groton,	Timothy Wightman.	
		Silas Burris.	
1775		Rufus Allen.	
	Stonington,	Eleazer Brown.	
1765		Simeon Brown.	
1775	Stonington Point,	Vacant.	
	New London,	Zadoc Darrow.	
	Saybrook,	Elipheleth Lester.	
	Lyme,	Jason Lee.	
1782	Norwich,	Christopher Palmer.	

## COUNTY OF WINDHAM.

1750	Killingly,	John Martin.	
1776		Vacant,	59
1766	Woodstock,	Biel Ledoyt,	143
1776	Pomfret,	Vacant.	
1774	Ashford,	Vacant.	
1779		John Rathbun.	
1780	Willington,	David Lillebridge.	
1780	Mansfield,	Vacant.	

## RHODE ISLAND.—COUNTY OF NEWPORT.

Year.	Town.	Ministers.	No.
1644	Newport,	Erasmus Kelly, A. M.,	25
1656		Gardner Thurston,	230
1671		William Bliss,	39
1685	Tiverton,	Peleg Burroughs,	134

## COUNTY OF PROVIDENCE.

1639	Providence,	James Manning, A. M.,	127
	Scituate,	Reuben Hopkins.	
	Smithfield,	John Winsor.	
	Cumberland,	Abner Ballou.	
	Glocester,	Joseph Winsor,	79
	North Providence,	Rufus Tift.	
1771	Johnston,	Samuel Winsor.	
	Foster,	Nathan Young.	

## COUNTY OF WASHINGTON.

1708	Hopkinton,	Joshua Clarke.	
1750	Westerly,	Vacant.	
		Josiah Wilcox.	
	Charlestown,	Samuel Niles.	
	South Kingstown,	Benjamin Waite.	
		Vacant.	
1710	North Kingstown,	Nathan Hill.	
		Philip Jenkins.	
		William Northup.	
1750	Exeter,	Solomon Sprague.	
1772	Richmond,	Thomas West.	
		Vacant.	

## COUNTY OF KENT.

	Warwick,	Abraham Lippitt.	
1743	East Greenwich,	John Gorton.	
	Coventry,	Thomas Manchester.	
		Caleb Nichols,	300
	West Greenwich,	Elisha Greene.	

## COUNTY OF BRISTOL.

1764	Warren,	Vacant.	
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Total number, 4,783.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In the first edition, this chapter was followed by the Appendix given in Volume I as Appendix A, which was the close of Volume II.—Ed.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

INTRODUCTION.—AN ELECTION SERMON.—REMARKS THEREON.—THE TRUE WAY OF DIGNITY AND HOLINESS.—A FALSE CHARGE.—AN UNJUST LAW.—REMARKS UPON IT.—HOW MINISTERS CAME BY THEIR POWER IN NEW ENGLAND.—THE BAD USE THEY MADE OF IT.—HOW A BISHOP CAME HERE.—AND TWO TO THE SOUTHWARD.—METHODISM DESCRIBED.—AND THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSALISM.—CRUEL OPPRESSION—AN INSURRECTION FOLLOWED.

When peace was restored to America, she entered upon such a new state of political existence as no people were ever in before. All the governments among men that ever were before formed, were forced upon the people by a few powerful leaders, or else were given by immediate inspiration from God. But the people in this land have framed their own governments, and elected their own rulers, without inspiration from Heaven, or violence from men. Though in doing these things, they have gone through great changes, which have discovered many of the corruptions of men, and of the infinite perfections of God. And a plain record thereof in New England, especially as to religious affairs, may be very serviceable to mankind. Instructive and useful histories of our military, civil and political concerns, have been already published; but the state of our churches since the war, has been but slightly touched. Therefore, an account of the state of religion, and of the government of our churches, is here attempted. And as Connecticut has ever elected her own rulers, and made her own laws, they have



framed no new constitution of government since the Revolution, but only altered their laws as they thought proper.

And to prepare the way for a new system of laws, the president of their university said to their legislature, "Dominion is founded in property; and resides where that is, whether in the hands of the few or many." And he held that the power of religious ministers is derived by an external succession from the apostles, through the churches of Rome and England; and said of New England, "The induction of the ministers of the first churches, was performed by lay brethren, and this was called ordination, but should be considered what in reality it was, only induction or instalment of those who were vested with official power. These were all ordained before by the bishops in England." And he encouraged them to go on in supporting such ministers by force, by saying:—

God be thanked, the senatorial Assembly of this happiest of all the United States, still embosoms so many Phinehases and Zerubbabels, so many religious patriots, the friends of Jesus and his holy religion; and that the Messiah's cause is here accompanied with civil government and the priesthood; allusively, the two olive trees upon the right of the candlestick (the churches) and upon the left; the two golden branches, which, through the two golden pipes, Moses and Aaron, empty the golden oil out of themselves, and diffuse their salutary influence of order and happiness through the community. Zech. iv. 11. As to nominal Christianity, I have no doubt but that it will be upheld for ages in these States. Through the liberty enjoyed here, all religious sects will grow up into large and respectable bodies. But the Congregational and Presbyterian denomination, however hitherto despised, will, by the blessing of Heaven, continue to hold the greatest figure in America, and, notwithstanding all the fruitless labors and exertions to proselyte us to other communions, become more numerous than the whole collective body of our fellow protestants in Europe. The whole proselytism of New England in particular for sixty or seventy years past, has not exceeded eight or ten thousand, while our augment in that term, by natural increase, has been half a million.<sup>1</sup>

These things were published by the highest authority in Connecticut, just after the news of peace arrived, and many

<sup>1</sup>Election Sermon at Hartford, May 8, 1783. By Ezra Stiles, D. D., President of Yale College, pp. 8, 61, 73.

were pleased therewith. But we would now desire to ask a few questions. And first, As it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than it is for any who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God, how can dominion be founded in property? Mark x. 24, 25. Yea, as all our American governments are founded in covenants, and not in riches, how dangerous is the above teaching? And as our rulers have solemnly sworn to renounce all foreign jurisdiction over us, how can they compel any to support teachers who hold their power of office by succession from Europe? And as persons who are born again, are the only holy priesthood that God hath under heaven, how can the priesthood be conveyed by an external laying on of hands? I Peter i. 23; ii. 5, 9. And as the golden oil is the Spirit and grace of God, how can it be diffused through a community by the laws of men enforced by the sword? Zech. iv. 6—12. For our Lord warns us to beware of the leaven of hypocrisy, which is caused by covetousness; to avoid which he refused to be concerned in dividing of estates. Luke xii. 1—15. Neither could Peter give any countenance to the distinction between Jews by nature, and sinners of the Gentiles, without dissimulation; and a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Gal. ii. 12—15; v. 9. The covenant of circumcision made natural birth the first door into the church of Israel; and how can natural increase make any better churches now, than it did of the seed of Abraham, who were a generation of vipers, and had no right to baptism without personal repentance? Matt. iii. 6—10. And God says, If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Rom. viii. 9. How then can any man be a minister of Christ without his Spirit, let him be ordained by whom he may? God was the only lawgiver to the church of Israel; and Phinehas and Zerubbabel were no more than executors of the laws of God in that church. And he never allowed any to use force in the collection of the support of his ministers therein; but every man was to bring in the tithes and offerings which he

required of them, as they would desire his blessing, and to escape his awful curse. Mal. iii. 7—12. Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. I Cor. ix. 14. And how great is the difference between the gospel of Christ, and the laws of men enforced by the sword? Each man in Israel was to bring in all the offerings which God required, so as to be able to say to him, I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them. And upon this Moses said, Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people as he hath promised thee and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments: and to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor, and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken. Deut. xxvi. 13, 17—19.

A willing obedience to all the revealed will of God, and about his house and worship in particular, was the way in which he made them high above all other nations, especially in the days of David and Solomon; and they were no otherwise a holy people, than as they obeyed all his commandments, and as the visible presence of God was among them, in his tabernacle and temple. Yet the above president of the second university in America, took the last of these verses for his text, and applied that promise of God to Israel which they could only enjoy in obedience to his laws, unto the people of America, and especially to those of the Congregational and Presbyterian denomination, who support their ministers by the laws of men, enforced by the sword. Yea, and the rulers who make and enforce those laws, received their power from the people, who can take it away again at the next election, while said ministers hold their power by succession from Europe, and hold that no men can ordain ministers but ministers who hold to such a power; and



when they have ordained them over a particular society, that society must be forced to support them, until ministers will release them therefrom. But if the people have given never so much for the settlement of a minister, he can leave them when he pleaseth, if other ministers will approve of it, and the people can have no recompense. Thus partiality is established by law; and the root of it is the yoke which ministers have laid upon children in their infancy. And to those who loose themselves from that yoke, a noted minister in Connecticut said, "When you re-baptize those in adult years, which we have baptized in their infancy, you and they jointly renounce that Father, Son and Holy Ghost, whom we adore and worship as the only living and true God, and on whom we depend for all our salvation."<sup>1</sup> And what greater evil can any men be accused of in this world? For they who secretly enticed any away from the service of the true God, were to die without mercy. Deut. xiii. 6—11. But they who were sprinkled in infancy answered no conscience towards God at all, neither did it produce any change in them, as all experience who have any right to baptism. For all who have a right to that ordinance, are first made dead to sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we are *buried* with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom. vi. 2—11. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Gal. iii. 27. And this is done by the obedience of faith, and in no other way; and in vain do any accuse such of renouncing the only living and true God. But having such teaching from their ministers, a new law-book was published in Connecticut, in 1784, wherein, by one law, they gave all the societies that were before constituted, all their meeting-houses and ministerial lands, with power to support their ministers by tax

<sup>1</sup>An Address to his Anabaptist brethren. By Joseph Huntington, DD. 1783, p. 23.

and compulsion. And then they made another law, as follows:—

An act for securing the rights of conscience in matters of religion, to Christians of every denomination in this State.

As the happiness of a people, and the good order of civil society, essentially depend upon piety, religion and morality, it is the duty of the civil authority to provide for the support and encouragement thereof; so as that Christians of every denomination, demeaning themselves peaceably, and as good subjects of the State, may be equally under the protection of the law: and as the people of this State have in general been of one profession in matters of faith, religious worship, and the mode of settling and supporting the ministry of the gospel, they have by law been formed into ecclesiastical societies, for the more convenient support of their worship and ministry: and to the end that other denominations of Christians who dissent from the worship and ministry so established and supported, may enjoy free liberty of conscience in the matters aforesaid:

Be it enacted by the Governor, Council, and Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That no persons in this State, professing the Christian religion, who soberly and conscientiously dissent from the worship and ministry by law established in the society wherein they dwell, and attend public worship by themselves, shall incur any penalty for not attending the worship and ministry so established, on the Lord's days, or on account of their meeting together by themselves on said day, for public worship agreeable to their consciences.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all denominations of Christians differing in their religious sentiments from the people of the established societies in this State, whether of the Episcopal church, or those Congregationalists called Separates, or the people called Baptists, or Quakers, or any other denomination who shall have formed themselves into distinct churches or congregations, and attend public worship, and support the gospel ministry in a way agreeable to their consciences and respective professions; and all persons who adhere to any of them, and dwell so near to any place of their worship that they can and do ordinarily attend the same on the Sabbath, and contribute their due proportion to the support of the worship and ministry where they so attend, whether such place of worship be within this, or any adjoining State, and produce a certificate thereof from such church or congregation, signed by their order, by the minister or other officer thereof, and lodge the same with the clerk of the society wherein such person or persons dwell, every such person shall be exempted from being taxed for the support of the worship and ministry of said society, so long as he or they shall continue so to attend and support public worship with a different church or congregation as aforesaid.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all such protestant churches and congregations as dissent from the worship and ministry established as aforesaid, and who maintain and attend public worship by themselves, shall have liberty and authority to use and exercise the same powers and privileges for maintaining and supporting their respective ministers, and building and repairing their meeting-houses for the public worship of God, as the ecclesiastical societies constituted by act of the General Assembly of this State by law have and do exercise and enjoy ; and in the same manner may commence and hold their meetings, and transact their affairs, as occasion may require for the purpose aforesaid.

And all persons shall be taxed for the support of the ministry and other charges of the society wherein they dwell, who do not attend and help support any other public worship ; any thing in this act notwithstanding.

And every person claiming the benefit of this act, shall be disqualified to vote in any society meeting, save only for granting taxes for the support of schools, and for the establishment of rules and regulations for schools, and the education of children in them.

The wisdom of this world is here remarkably discovered. And a minister who was born in Connecticut, has lately said of their religion, “ The best in the world, perhaps, for a republican government. As to the mode of exercising church government and discipline, it might not improperly be called a republican religion.”<sup>1</sup> Yet it may be serviceable to review the way by which it was introduced, and by which it grew up to its present height. Our fathers who planted Plymouth Colony, held that the church of Christ was to be governed by his laws, independent of all the laws of men ; and they never would support religious ministers by force so long as Governor Bradford lived, which was thirty-seven years after they came to Plymouth. But the next year after they came into the use of force for that purpose, two Quakers were hanged at Boston. The congregational name was invented by the Massachusetts, who held that the church ought to govern the world, and to force all to submit to their power. And when that power was in great danger, partly by the increase of the Baptists among them, one of their greatest ministers said, “ It is made by learned and judicious writers,

<sup>1</sup>Morse's Geography, third edition, 1791, p. 109.



one of the undoubted rights of sovereignty to determine what religion shall be publicly professed and exercised within their dominions. Why else do we in New England that profess the doctrine of Calvin, yet practice the discipline of them called Independent, or Congregational churches, but because the authority of the country is persuaded that it is most agreeable to the mind of God?"<sup>1</sup> But their charter was taken away eight years after, and in 1692 their second charter took place, which gave the world a power above the church about religious ministers; though this was so odious in the eyes of many fathers in Boston, that they procured a special act, the next winter, to exempt Boston from the cruel yoke that hath been laid upon the country ever since.

The Presbyterian and Congregational ministers in England had formed a connection together a little before, and the like was tried for in the Massachusetts soon after; but the writings of Mr. John Wise prevented it. But in the close of 1707, a minister who came from the Massachusetts, was elected Governor of Connecticut,<sup>2</sup> and he prevailed to carry that scheme. And it was done by bringing a bill into their Legislature, which met May 13, 1708, which said:—

This Assembly, from their own observation, and from the complaint of others, being sensible of the defects of the discipline of the churches of this government, arising from the want of a more explicit asserting the rules given for that end in the Holy Scriptures, from which would arise a firm establishment amongst ourselves, a good and regular issue in cases subject to ecclesiastical discipline, glory to Christ, our Head, and edification to his members, hath seen fit to ordain and require, and it is by the authority of the same ordained and required, that the ministers of the churches in the several counties of this government, shall meet together at their respective county-towns, with such messengers as the churches to which they belong shall see cause to send with them, on the last Monday in June next, there to consider and agree upon those methods and rules for the management of ecclesiastical discipline which by them shall be judged agreeable and conformable to the word of God; and shall at the same meeting appoint two or more of their number to be their delegates, who

<sup>1</sup>Hubbard's Election Sermon at Boston, May 3, 1676, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup>Gordon Saltonstall. See Vol. I, pp. 469, 536.—ED.

shall all meet together at Saybrook at the next Commencement to be held there, where they shall compare the results of the ministers of the several counties, and out of, and from them, draw a form of ecclesiastical discipline.

Their College was then at Saybrook, which afterwards was removed to New Haven. The ministers met according to appointment, and drew up their scheme of discipline, which the legislature, which met October 14, 1708, established by law. It allows each church to elect her own officers, and to discipline her members ; but if any person thinks that he is unjustly censured, he may appeal from the sentence of the church to a Consociation in each county, whose sentence is to be final and decisive, if the majority of the ministers present are in the vote, and not without. Neither can any man obtain a meeting of the Consociation to hear his case, unless an Association of ministers advise them to meet. At the same time the ministers in each county meet in Association when they please, without any act of their churches, and claim the whole power of licensing candidates for the ministry, and of advising churches whom to call to preach to them. And the ministers in each county choose delegates out of their number, to meet once a year in a General Association from each county in their government, to consult about their affairs, and to complain to their legislature against any society or person as they think proper.

When the Lord poured out his Spirit in a most glorious manner in 1741, under the ministry of travelling preachers, they complained of it to their legislature in October, which ordered a special Consociation to meet upon it in November, and they declared it to be very disorderly for any minister to preach in a parish where another was settled, without his consent. And in May, 1742, an act was passed by their legislature, to exclude all their settled ministers from any benefit of the laws for their support, who should preach in any other parish without the consent of the parish minister. And if any man who was not a settled minister, should

preach or exhort in matters of religion, in any parish, against the consent of the parish minister, he should be imprisoned until he would give a bond of one hundred pounds not to do so any more ; and if any minister from other colonies should come and preach without such consent, he was to be carried by authority out of Connecticut government. And because one of their settled ministers preached two sermons in a Baptist church, against the consent of a Presbyterian minister in the town, other ministers persecuted him for five years, until they declared him to be deposed from his office, and excluded from the communion of their churches, and said they did it “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the word of God, and the powers invested in this Consociation, by the ecclesiastical constitution of this government.”<sup>1</sup> Thus they held that the Lord Jesus Christ was the head of the government of Connecticut, and that his laws and theirs were blended together ; and is not this a part of Mystery Babylon ? And they now say, “All persons shall be taxed for the support of the ministry and other charges of the society wherein they dwell, who do not attend and help support any other worship.” And is not this a mark of the beast ? for he is of a scarlet color, and is very changeable. He was, and is not, and yet is. Rev. xiii. 17 ; xvii. 3, 5, 8. Blood hath ever followed the support of worship by the sword of the magistrate. But where the children of God and the children of the devil dwell in the field of the world, and appear to be such by their fruits, our Lord says, Let both grow together until the harvest. Mat. xiii. 30, 38. But in the church we are commanded to turn away from all men who have *a form* of godliness, but deny the power thereof, while we are required to hold fast *the form* of sound words, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. And this he explains by saying, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 42—46, 83 ; Vol. I, pp. 469, 470.



God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." II Tim. i. 13; iii. 5, 16, 17. The only reason why he allows the men of the world to make laws, and to enforce them with the sword, is because they will not obey the laws of God, nor refrain from injuring their neighbors, without such forcible restraints. And it is readily granted, that piety, religion, and morality, are essentially necessary for the good order of civil society, and so are the showers and shines of heaven. But what a figure would any body of men make, if they should enact laws to determine when the sun should shine, and how often the showers should fall! For the Lord God is a *sun* and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Psalm lxxxiv. 11. For it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and *rain* righteousness upon us. Hosea x. 12. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of *lights*, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth. . . . Pure religion and undefiled, before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself *unspotted* from the world. James i. 17—27. The beast is as *spotted* as a leopard, as cruel as a bear, and as terrible as a lion. Rev. xiii. 2. And how can any man keep himself unspotted from the world, if he forces the world to support his worship?

As Congregational and Presbyterian ministers have done this, and hold to a successive power to do it, which came through the church of Rome, a minister who was born in Connecticut, obtained the title of Bishop of Connecticut, in a more direct line than our ministers have done. For he was ordained Bishop of Connecticut, by three bishops in Scotland, November 14, 1784, who derived their succession from three bishops in England, who refused to swear allegiance to King William, after he had driven the popish King James from the throne. So that his line came directly from

the church of Rome, without any connection with the government in Great Britain for a hundred years past. And this bishop holds that his authority came from Christ, as much as any can, and says, "A church in which Christ has no authority, cannot be his church ; it may be the Pope's church, or Luther's church, or Calvin's church, or Wesley's church, . . . . but Christ's church it cannot be, unless it be founded on his authority and governed by his commission. . . . The apostles being divinely inspired, and acting under the immediate direction of the Holy Ghost, in all things necessary to the establishment of the church according to the will of Christ, none of their successors could have authority to change the government they had established, unless they could plead the authority of Christ for the change, with as much certainty as the first apostles could for the original establishment, and could give the same proof of divine inspiration as those apostles had given."<sup>1</sup>

This is a most important truth ; and where can we find that the apostles called any ministers *Priests*, in distinction from other brethren of the church ? Until such a word can be found in their writings, we may boldly reject all pretences to the Christian priesthood, in all men who give no evidence of their being born again of the Spirit of God. And as soon as this man assumed the character of Bishop of Connecticut, it caused great concern in the church of England ; and a gentleman of great note therein,<sup>2</sup> wrote a letter to a Baptist minister in New England, to inform him that those bishops in Scotland had not good authority to consecrate others, and also that the people of Connecticut ought to elect their bishop, before he could lawfully act as such ; and he desired that some proper men might be sent over to be ordained by bishops in England. This letter was shown to

<sup>1</sup>Bishop Seabury's Ordination Sermon at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1791, pp. 14, 15.

<sup>2</sup>Granville Sharpe.—ED.

many Episcopalians, and one of them in New York took a copy of it, to lay before a convention of their ministers, who were to meet at Philadelphia in September. But this affair lay so heavy upon the mind of the said gentleman in England, that he wrote to Dr. Franklin upon it, October 29, 1785, and informed him that those bishops in Scotland had admitted "prayers for the dead, and extreme unction among them."<sup>1</sup> And one minister from New York, and another from Philadelphia,<sup>2</sup> were sent over, and were consecrated by bishops in England; and each of them have been chaplains to our senators in Congress, with a salary of five hundred dollars a year. But as our rulers have solemnly sworn to renounce all foreign jurisdiction over America, how can they have a right to give public money to any who hold a commission from Europe? Can any man wonder at the confusion which is now in our country, while promises and oaths are so little regarded?

And as little of it appears among a new sect which is now formed in America. Mr. John Wesley was ordained a presbyter of the church of England, with a solemn oath to obey and teach her articles of faith, and forms of worship; and yet he published a sermon in 1739, against several of those articles, and he preached against them in England, Scotland and Ireland, for above forty years, and then he and his followers, seeing how the American war ended, reduced their thirty-nine articles to twenty-four, with new forms of worship and order, and published them in London in 1784, and called them *The Sunday Service in North America*. Three orders of ordained officers are prescribed therein, besides

<sup>1</sup>Historical Collections at Boston, Vol. III, p. 164. In February, 1795, Bishop Seabury published a letter to his brethren, in the Connecticut papers, in which he styles himself "Samuel, by divine permission, Bishop of Connecticut and Rhode Island;" though he has but about thirty societies in Connecticut, and four in the State of Rhode Island, and there are between three and four hundred religious societies in those two States, of other denominations. What then could be expected from such men, if their power was equal to their inclinations?—B.

<sup>2</sup>Samuel Prevoost, D. D., and William White, D. D.—Ed.



preachers who are not ordained. And when they ordain the lowest of the three, they say :—

Will you reverently obey them to whom the charge and government over you is committed, following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions? Answer. I will endeavor so to do, the Lord being my helper.<sup>1</sup>

And many of his followers met at Baltimore, in Maryland, December 27, 1784, and drew up a pamphlet, entitled, "A Form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers, and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America." They allow no man to be a preacher in their church, but such as profess a belief that perfection is attainable in this life. They date the beginning of their societies in America, from the labors of some preachers who came over from Ireland about the year 1764 ; and they say :—

What may we reasonably believe to be God's design in raising up the preachers called Methodists? Answer. To reform the continent, and spread Scripture holiness over these lands. As a proof hereof, we have seen in the course of fifteen years a great work of God, from New York through the Jerseys, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, even to Georgia.

And they say :—

We are thoroughly convinced, that the church of England, to which we have been united, is deficient in several of the most important parts of Christian discipline ; and that (a few ministers and members excepted) it has lost the life and power of religion. We are not ignorant of the spirit and designs it has ever discovered in Europe, of rising to preëminence and worldly dignities by virtue of a national establishment, and by the most servile devotion to the will of temporal governors ; and we fear the same spirit will lead the same church in these United States (though altered in name) to similar designs and attempts, if the number and strength of its members will ever afford a probability of success ; and particularly to obtain a national establishment, which we cordially abhor as the bane of truth and holiness, the greatest impediment in the world to the progress of vital Christianity. For these reasons, we have thought it our duty to form ourselves into an independent church. And as the most excellent mode of church government, according to our maturest judgment, is that of a moderate episcopacy ; and as we are persuaded, that the uninterrupted succes-

<sup>1</sup>Sunday Service, p. 283.

sion of bishops from the apostles, can be proved neither from Scripture nor antiquity ; we therefore have constituted ourselves into an Episcopal church, under the direction of bishops, elders, deacons, and preachers, according to the forms of ordination annexed to our prayer book, and the regulations laid down in this form of discipline.<sup>1</sup>

Thus they undertook to be lawgivers for all North America, and to form a church therein that never had any existence until the year 1784. And their teachers have taken great pains to draw off people from all other religious communities in our land, by confounding works and grace together. Mr. Wesley held that Christ died equally for all mankind, but that men are saved by their own faith and obedience, which yet they may fall from, and perish forever. And he says :—

Unconditional election cannot appear, without the cloven foot of reprobation. I believe *election* means, a divine appointment of some men to eternal happiness. But I believe this election to be conditional, as well as the reprobation opposite thereto. I believe the eternal decree concerning both, is expressed in those words, He that believeth shall be saved ; he that believeth not shall be damned. And this decree, without doubt, God will not change, and man cannot resist. According to this, all true believers are in Scripture termed *elect* ; as all who continue in unbelief are so long properly reprobates, that is, unapproved of God, and without discernment touching the things of the Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

But all men may know that there is no such decree in the word of God, and also that he never set reprobation in opposition to election. For he says, The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Rom. xi. 7. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. II Cor. iv. 4. As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth ; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. II Tim. iii. 8. Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates. II Cor. xiii. 5. And is it not blas-

<sup>1</sup>Methodist Form of Discipline, printed at New York, 1787, pp. 1—6, 13, 30.

<sup>2</sup>Wesley on Predestination, fifth edition, pp. 9, 10.

phemy, for any to say, that God cannot elect, sanctify and save a part of mankind, without putting unbelief, blindness and corruption into all the rest? Yet Wesley and his followers insist upon this with daring boldness. And he also says, "One who is a true believer, or, in other words, one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself, may nevertheless finally fall from grace."<sup>1</sup> But the Son of God says, All that the Father giveth me, shall, come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. John vi. 37. He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar. I John v. 10. And how awful is their case!

Yet a minister in Boston, who had published the most, for forty years, of any man in America, to keep up the Congregational establishment, published a book in 1784, to prove that Christ not only died for all men, but also that he will finally save them all from hell. And he denied that there was any word in the Bible, that we could know by it that it meant without end, without other considerations than the word itself. And he says, "In what point of light soever we take a view of sin, it is certainly in its nature, a finite evil. . . . And the consideration of hell as a purging fire, is that only which can make the matter sit easy upon one's mind."<sup>2</sup> But if the Holy Scriptures have no word in them to distinguish certainly between a limited time, and endless continuance, it is the most imperfect book upon earth. And the fire of God's wrath in a future state, is so far from being a purging fire, that he says, Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of

<sup>1</sup>Wesley on Predestination, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup>Chauncy on Salvation for all Men, pp. 319, 324. Dr. Jonathan Edwards published a full answer to him in 1790.



the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of Hosts. Mal. iv. 1—3. Again he says, The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many. Is. lxvi. 14—16. And afterwards great numbers shall be converted, from all nations; and God says, As the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. Is. lxiv. 22. And if we compare these prophecies with the last four chapters in the Revelation, have we not reason to conclude, that the awful destructions among the nations, which God is now making by fire and sword, are to usher in the latter day glory? Yea, are not these the burnings which shall introduce the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness? II Pet. iii. 12, 13. For the scoffers, walking after their own lusts, were never so open and daring against all religion before, in any age or country, as they are now in Europe and America. But the unlearned and unstable, wrest the Scriptures unto their own destruction. II Pet. iii. 3, 4, 16. And one way in which this is done, is by putting earthly universities in the place of the teaching of the Spirit of God, calling them *Rivers*, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.<sup>1</sup> For he says, Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the *rivers* of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; and his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall pros-

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 446.—ED.

per. Psalm i. 1—3 ; xlv. 4. And Jesus said, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow *rivers* of living water. John vii. 37, 38. But how often have men put human learning in the place of saving faith in the Son of God!

The first university in America is in Cambridge, where an early example of oppression appeared after the war. A Baptist church was constituted in that town in 1781, and they had a pastor ordained in 1783 ; yet they were all taxed for the support of Congregational ministers, and three men were imprisoned therefor in 1784. Therefore they sued the assessors who taxed them, and their case was carried through their inferior and superior courts in 1785, and was turned against the Baptists, which cost them more than a hundred dollars. The constitution of our government restrained our rulers from making any certificate law, as they did in Connecticut, whereby dissenters from the ruling party might be exempted from taxes to their worship ; and if any persons might draw off from them without acknowledging that they had power to bind and loose in such affairs, the use of force to support religious ministers would come to an end. Therefore a great lawyer informed those oppressed people, that if they would give in certificates to the ruling sect, that they belonged to said Baptist society, and would have their money go to the minister thereof, he might sue the money out of the hands of those who took it. This advice he founded upon the words in our constitution which say :—

All moneys paid by the subject to the support of public worship, and of the public teachers aforesaid, shall, if *he* require it, be uniformly applied to the support of the public teacher or teachers of his own religious sect or denomination, provided there be any on whose instructions he attends ; otherwise it may be paid towards the support of the teacher or teachers of the parish or precinct in which said moneys are raised.

This article was drawn by another great lawyer ; and men of that profession are interested in supporting religious

teachers by force as really as any men in the world; for a great part of their gains come by controversies about religion; and when teachers and lawyers are in confederacy together, they will make words to mean any thing which they please. And in the above article, they construed the word *He* to mean the teacher who was to receive the money, and not the man who paid it. And rather than to suffer continually, those Baptists in Cambridge complied with the advice of the lawyers, and their minister sued the money out of the hands of their oppressors from time to time, until they left off collecting such money; and the like was done in various parts of the country.<sup>1</sup> Our constitution says, "All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights." And the right to receive and support faithful teachers, and to refuse to support those who are unfaithful, is one of the most essential rights of conscience that can be named; yet this right is daily violated by all men who support their teachers by tax and compulsion. Again, the Massachusetts constitution says, "No subordination of any one sect or denomination to another, shall ever be established by law." Yet the Congregational denomination have constantly violated this article also. Though to hide it they made a law in March, 1786, which confounded ministerial and civil taxes together, and empowered every man in each town who pays two-thirds more in one

<sup>1</sup> "October 31, [1785.] Met with all our Committee upon the following affair, viz.: In Menotomy parish in Cambridge, Gresham Cutler, and two more of the Baptist society there were strained upon last fall for taxes to parish worship, and they sued for recompense, and after long delays the case was turned in their favor at the County Court at Concord, in September; but at the Superior Court in Cambridge, on October 26, Judge Sargeant declared their old laws to be in force, and that they knew no society in this Commonwealth but corporate bodies; with whom Judge Sewall concurred, and the jury turned the case against the Baptists the next day. The other judges said little upon the case. Our committee, when now met, concluded that if they would go on and take away our people's money, that our ministers should demand it again, according to the judges' interpretation of the Third Article in our Bill of Rights; all but myself, who could not concur therewith. Our elders Stillman, Skillman, Smith and Blood, all thus differed from me." Backus's Diary.—ED.



tax than a poll tax, to vote in such affairs. And the act says :—

The freeholders, and other inhabitants of each respective town, qualified as aforesaid, at the annual meeting, for the choice of town officers, or at any other town meeting regularly warned, may grant and vote such sums of money as they shall judge necessary, for the settlement, maintenance and support of the ministry, schools, the poor, and other necessary charges arising within the same town ; to be assessed upon the polls and property within the same, as by law provided.

Here is not the least regard paid to the church of Christ ; but fornicators, drunkards, railers and extortioners, have equal votes with all the best men in the land, to determine who shall be guides for their souls, and how they shall be supported. And God says of antichristian teachers, They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. I John iv. 5. But how terrible were the effects of such things ? For the love of the world had induced many to run into debt, and it made others now fierce for calling in their debts, and collectors to get their taxes, which caused much business in courts, and a great increase of lawyers ; therefore a man in Boston began to publish essays in their papers against lawyers, the same month in which the above law was made, which essays were collected into a pamphlet in July. And the people felt themselves so much distressed, that, in August and September, they arose in arms against their courts, in the counties of Hampshire, Berkshire, Worcester, Middlesex, and Bristol.<sup>1</sup> Hereupon the town of Boston wrote to all the towns in the Massachusetts, requesting them to bring in accounts of their grievances, and promising to use their influence in their favor. And the legislature was called together, and heard many complaints, and they published an address to the people, November 14, 1786, in which they said :—

We feel in common with our neighbors the scarcity of money ; but is not this scarcity owing to our own folly ? At the close of the war, there

<sup>1</sup>The well known Shays's Rebellion.—ED.

was no complaint of it ; since that time, our fields have yielded their increase, and Heaven has showered its blessings on us, in uncommon abundance. But are we not constrained to allow that immense sums have been expended for what is of no value, for the gewgaws imported from Europe, and the more pernicious produce of the West Indies ; and the dread of a paper currency impedes the circulation of what remains? . . . . As the difficulty in paying debts increased, a disregard to honesty, justice, and good faith,<sup>1</sup> in public and private transactions, became more manifest. Some persons have artfully affected to make a distinction between the government and the people, as though their interests were different and even opposite ; but we presume, the good sense of our constituents will discern the deceit and falsity of these insinuations. Within a few months the authority delegated to us will cease, and all citizens will be equally candidates in a future election.

But all their reasoning could not quiet those people ; therefore an army was sent up and subdued them by force. Though in the next election, the Governor and above half the Legislature were left out of office, and fourteen men, who had been condemned to be hanged for rebellion, were all pardoned. And how came religious ministers to have a higher power over the people, to force away money from them, than our governors or legislators have ? yea, higher than the kings of Great Britain ? For the ministers who were formerly supported in the name of those kings, and since in the name of this State, still hold a power above them all. And are they not ministers of the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth ? And the voice from heaven says, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of their plagues. Rev. xvii. 18 ; xviii. 4.

<sup>1</sup>See Matt. xxiii. 23.





## CHAPTER XXXII.

A NEW PLAN OF GOVERNMENT.—NO RELIGIOUS TESTS THEREIN.—BRIBERY EXPOSED.—A CONCISE VIEW OF THE WARREN ASSOCIATION.—SOUTHERN LABORS FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.—OPPOSITION TO CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.—ANOTHER CONNECTICUT LAW.—A VIEW OF THE COLLEGE AT PROVIDENCE.—DR. MANNING FAITHFUL THEREIN.—PUBLIC FAITH UNIVERSALLY VIOLATED.—OPPRESSION AT BARNSTABLE AND ELSEWHERE.—EVILS AT REHOBOTH DESCRIBED.—AND AT TAUNTON AND POMFRET.—ALSO AMONG THE MINISTERS IN GENERAL.—THE DOCTRINE OF LAYING ON OF HANDS OPENED.—AND THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

As long as the fear of foreign dangers prevailed, our Congress was wonderfully obeyed ; but as that fear abated, the love of the honors, riches and pleasures of this world weakened their authority, until they could not govern this great country. For while some States made laws to regulate trade, and to guard against foreign encroachments, other States took advantage to enrich themselves. These things were very distressing in these northern parts, while the people to the southward were not benefited thereby. For Virginia had long received their religious teachers from Europe, as well as many civil merchants ; and Baptist ministers had often been imprisoned for preaching the gospel without license from Episcopalians, until the war put a stop to it. And after the war they tried hard to revive that power again. But the Baptists and others prevailed, in the beginning of 1786, to have a law made, which says :—

That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, mo-

lest, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.<sup>1</sup>

Yet their houses for worship, and their large tracts of ministerial lands, were still held by Episcopalians; and the frequent addresses of the Baptists to their legislature, to have those lands sold for public uses, or that they and their houses for worship might be free for all such ministers as the people chose, were disregarded. So hard is it for men to give up any worldly advantage which they have obtained under the mask of religion. The beast had feet like a bear. Rev. xiii. 2. And no bear ever grasped harder to hold his prey, than men now do to hold the power and gain which religious pretences have given them. Yet, by a motion from Virginia, the Congress recommended it to all these States, to elect delegates to meet at Philadelphia, in order to form a better plan of government than they then enjoyed. Accordingly twelve States met there by delegation, and labored upon it for about four months, until they finished a new constitution of government on September 17, 1787, and sent it out to all these States, and some of them adopted it soon, while others did not receive it in two years. And if men find it to be so hard a matter to agree about the affairs of time, why should they pretend to force all to unite in the great concerns of eternity? If they differ so much about perishing things which are visible, how can they unite in the service of the invisible Jehovah, who is beloved by his children, and is hated by the world? For every one that doeth evil, *hateth the light*; and Jesus says, *I am the light of the world; but they hated me without a cause.* John iii. 20; viii. 12; xv. 25. And though this hatred hath been covered, in every age, under the name of religion or government, yet the feast of the gospel, in the church of Christ, will destroy the face of the

<sup>1</sup>Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, p. 243

covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. Is. xxv. 6, 7. The Christian nations have laid *bands* upon children, before they could choose for themselves, and have forced them to support the national worship all their days. But God says to his people, Loose thyself from the *bands* of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed *without money*. . . . Thy God reigneth. Is. lii. 2, 3, 7. This is the *gospel of peace*. Rom. x. 15. And as surely as he reigneth above, no men below can have any right to make laws to bind any in religious affairs. But how hardly are men brought to give up this power over the consciences of others! For on January 9, 1788, a convention of delegates from all parts of the Massachusetts met at Boston. and debated long upon the new constitution of government which was formed in Philadelphia, until they, with great difficulty, adopted it on February 6, by a majority of nineteen votes, there being a hundred and eighty-seven against a hundred and sixty-eight<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>"A new Constitution for the United States of America was finished at Philadelphia, September 17, 1787; and our town met on December 17, and chose four delegates to meet in Boston, January 9, 1788, with others in Convention, to establish or reject it; of which delegates I was the first, without the least motion of mine that way. When I was first informed of it, on December 20, I thought I should not go, but as religious liberty is concerned in the affair, and many were earnest for my going, I consented, and went as far as Elder Briggs's January 14, and went into Boston January 15, and met with the Convention that day and the next in the State House, but as we had not room enough there, we removed, the 17th, to Mr. Belknap's meeting-house, in Long Lane, where we continued our meetings from day to day, until the Constitution was ratified on February 6, by a hundred and eighty-seven yeas against a hundred and sixty-eight nays, being a majority of nineteen. Each delegate had full liberty, in his turn, to say all he pleased, by means of which I obtained much more light about the extensive affairs of our country, the nature of the proposed Constitution, and the security of the rights of the people therein, than I had when I went from home, and therefore voted for it. And yet Elder Alden of Bellingham, Elder Rathbun of Pittsfield, Elder Tingley of Waterbury, County of York, all voted against it, and so did two-thirds of the Baptist members of the Convention, of which there were above twenty. Elder Stillman and I, with twelve Congregational ministers, voted for it, though, doubtless, with very different views. The exclusion of any hereditary, lordly power, and of any religious test, I view as our greatest securities in this constitution; but perhaps many mean no more thereby than the exclusion of such lordship as they have in England, and of requiring any assent to any prescribed forms of faith or worship." Backus's Diary.—Ed.



One of the greatest objections that was made against it, was, that no religious test was required therein, of any of the officers of government. But after much had been said upon it, a Congregational minister<sup>1</sup> arose and said :—

The great object of religion being God supreme, and the seat of religion in man being the heart or conscience, that is, the reason God has given us, employed on our moral actions, in their most important consequences, as related to the tribunal of God, hence I infer, that God alone is the God of the conscience, and consequently, attempts to erect human tribunals for the consciences of men, are impious encroachments upon the prerogatives of God.

But as this did not silence their objections on that head, a Baptist minister arose five days after, and said :—

Nothing is more evident, both in reason, and in the Holy Scriptures, than that religion is ever a matter between God and individuals; and therefore no man or men can impose any religious test, without invading the essential prerogatives of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ministers first assumed this power under the Christian name; and then Constantine approved of the practice, when he adopted the profession of Christianity as an engine of State policy. And let the history of all nations be searched, from that day to this, and it will appear that the imposing of religious tests hath been the greatest engine of tyranny in the world. . . . The covenant of circumcision gave the seed of Abraham a right to destroy the inhabitants of Canaan, and to take their houses, vineyards, and all their estates as their own; and also to buy and hold others as servants. And as Christian privileges are much greater than those of the Hebrews were, many have imagined that they had a right to seize upon the lands of the heathen, and to destroy or enslave them as far as they could extend their power. And from thence the mystery of iniquity carried many into the practice of making merchandise of slaves and souls of men.<sup>2</sup>

But this was not suffered to be printed in the same paper in Boston, in which the speech of the Congregational minister was printed. Though the wisdom which is from above, is without *partiality* and without *hypocrisy*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Rev. Philips Payson, of Chelsea. See "Debates, Resolutions, &c., of the Convention," pp. 151, 152.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>This Address was by Mr. Backus himself. See "Debates, Resolutions, &c., of the Convention, p. 182.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup>The address of Mr. Payson appeared in the Massachusetts Gazette of February

But men often carry these evils farther under the name of religion and government, than they can do in any other way. For if any are dishonest in their private dealings, and refuse to perform their promises, others can avoid having any further trading with them; but promises and oaths are frequently violated in public affairs, when the most upright cannot bring the guilty to justice, nor escape from being injured by such men. A notable instance hereof now appeared in the State of Rhode Island. A number of men therein artfully represented to the people, that if a large bank of paper money was made, they might easily pay off their public and private debts; and they were accordingly elected into their legislature in 1786, and made such a bank. Some religious teachers were active in this scheme, by which the widow and the fatherless, with many others, were amazingly defrauded and oppressed. And in March, 1787, the men who were guilty of these evils, passed an act to cut off every man in the State from voting in their next election of rulers, until they had taken a new oath against bribery. By such means they were elected again into office, and they would never allow a convention to be called in that State, to consider of the new constitution of government for these United States, until the year 1790;<sup>1</sup> since which those deceitful men have been left out of office, and as great harmony is restored there as in other places. But in all parts of America the public promises of government are still violated, beyond what men in private stations can possibly do to each other, and yet continue in power and credit. And no men have suffered more in these times, than religious ministers who have conscientiously refused the use of force for their support. And as our Lord says, My kingdom is not of this world, how can his ministers have a right to force the world to support them? How can they exhort rulers and people

22, and in the Boston Gazette of February 25, neither of which papers, though in general they gave full reports of the Convention, noticed the speech of Mr. Backus.  
—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>It was adopted there May 29, 1790.

to venture their eternal all upon the truth of Christianity, if themselves refuse to trust it for their temporal living? Can any wonder that carelessness and infidelity prevail under such conduct? But as long as rulers can force away money from the people, for the support of religious teachers, it bribes them to exert all their influence in their favor; and this bribes rulers to continue in that practice; and God says, A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. Deut. xvi. 19. From whence we may learn the cause, why so many wise and righteous men are ensnared in these ways. At the same time, if men can save their money by renouncing the use of force to support religious ministers, many will use their liberty for an occasion to the flesh, and as a cloak of maliciousness, which serves to prejudice others against the liberty of the gospel.

The churches which formed the Warren Association, presented many addresses to our rulers, and publications to the world, against oppression, and for religious liberty, from their first formation in 1767, to the close of the war in 1783; and as long as the fear of suffering from others was powerful, it moved them to unite against their oppressors; but as that fear abated, the love of self and of earthly things, has in some instances prevailed against solemn promises and obligations. So our Lord says, Woe unto the world because of offences; for it must needs be that offences come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh. And he requires us to give each brother two opportunities to speak for himself, before the offence is told to the church, whose sentence is to decide the case. Matt. xviii. 7—18. But where teachers are supported by force, all are accounted offenders who refuse to have fellowship with that way. And many offences will arise among churches who have no such exercise of power, which require more discretion and patience in dealing with offenders according to the laws of Christ, than most Christians have attained unto. And when they have crowded matters into the church, without a due regard to his laws,



they want a higher power to appeal to, than a particular church of Christ. To call in advice, where the accuser and accused may be heard face to face, and suitable counsel be given for the church to act upon, is a practice which is warranted by Scripture and reason; but a power in councils above particular churches, has no foundation in Scripture, and is an endless source of confusion among Christians. Of this we have had much experience. When the Warren Association met at Middleborough, September 7, 1784, a minister who had censured some of his brethren, and refused to let them call in advice from other churches, came with a complaint against some who had gone to hear them without his consent; but he was reprov'd therefor. Yet when the Association met at Wrentham, September 13, 1785, he came with some queries which pointed to the same thing. And a man who had been excluded from another church, then came with an earnest request that the Association would interpose their influence in his favor; and because they refused to do it, he published a bitter complaint in a Boston newspaper. When they met at Newton, September 12, 1786, a complaint of a division in another church caused a considerable labor, and then a vote to leave them out of the Association, which is the farthest that they have a right to go in such cases. Their meeting at Chelmsford, September 11, 1787, was not interrupted with such things. Yet when they met at Sturbridge, September 9, 1788, a complaint was brought against the majority of another church, who had withdrawn from their minister and a part of their brethren, and the majority were left out of the Association, and the minister with the minority were recommended as the church. But as this was going too far, so the effects have been very unhappy ever since. And when the Association met again at Sturbridge, September 8, 1789, another minister made hard attempts to crowd a complaint against a church into it; but it was kept out, though with difficulty, and he has been since disowned by all our churches. And

all experience hath shown, that a particular church of Christ is the highest judicature that he hath established upon earth to carry his laws into execution in his name. And he says, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Matt. xviii. 20. In all earthly governments, the laws are executed in the name of the supreme authority of it, which can see but a little of what is done in its name. But the Son of God is present in every church, as well as through the world, by his universal knowledge and power; and if any of his churches leave their first love, and will not repent, he removes the candlestick out of his place. Rev. ii. 1—5.

Wise measures were now taken to the southward, to secure religious liberty. A general committee of the Baptist churches in Virginia, presented an address to the excellent Washington, upon his being chosen President to these United States, dated August 8, 1789, in which they said :—

When the constitution first made its appearance in Virginia, we, as a society, had unusual struggles of mind, fearing that the liberty of conscience (dearer to us than property or life) was not sufficiently secured. Perhaps our jealousies were heightened, on account of the usage we received in Virginia, under the regal government, when mobs, bonds, fines and prisons, were our frequent repast.

President Washington returned them an answer, wherein he said :—

If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the constitution framed in the convention where I had the honor to preside, might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it.

And he said to those Baptists :—

While I recollect with satisfaction, that the religious society of which you are members, have been, throughout America, uniformly and almost unanimously the firm friends of civil liberty, and the persevering promoters of our glorious revolution, I cannot hesitate to believe, that they will be the faithful supporters of a free, yet efficient general government.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Leland's Virginia Chronicle, pp. 47, 48.

And the next month the Congress proposed a number of amendments to our federal constitution, one of which says :—

Congress shall make no law, establishing articles of faith, or a mode of worship, or prohibiting the free exercise of religion, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition to the government for a redress of grievances.

This was dated September 23, 1789 ; but the Massachusetts legislature were so far from adopting of it, that we cannot find any record of any debates upon it. When this State was since sued, before the federal court at Philadelphia, our legislature was called together upon it, who instructed our members in Congress to use all their influence to procure an amendment of the constitution in that respect, and it was effected, and the amendment was readily adopted by the Massachusetts Legislature ; but the amendment about liberty of conscience is kept out of sight. But in vain do they think to hide their iniquity from the eternal God, who is no respecter of persons, but will reward every man according to his works. And the above testimony in favor of the Baptists in general, is confirmed by experience, and by the nature of things. For where no person can be made a member of the church, without his own consent, and each one can withdraw from it when he will. all cruel oppression is excluded. And such churches are not accountable for any over whom they have no power. Yet all the Baptists in Europe and America, have often been reproached with the madness of Munster, in 1533, where they tried to support their religion with the sword. Though the parliament of England revolted from the pope the same year, and set up their king as the head of the church. And all men who love the wages of unrighteousness, are guilty of madness. II Pet. ii. 15, 16. But they who are guilty of it, are commonly false accusers of all who soberly refuse to have fellowship with them therein. And the prophecy is fulfilled, which says, I beheld another beast coming up out of the



earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon, and he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. Rev. xiii. 11, 12. The two horns are, undoubtedly, the officers of church and State, uniting their influence in schemes of power and gain, under the name of religion and government. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, gave the first beast a deadly wound, when the pure doctrine of salvation by grace was proclaimed in the reformation. But that doctrine, and the government of the church of Christ by his holy laws, are as much opposed now by Protestants, as ever they were by the church of Rome. And how little do the people of New England now act according to the high opinion that others have entertained of them? For an excellent author in South Carolina, speaking of the beginning of the war in 1775, says:—

It was a fortunate circumstance for the colonies that the royal army was posted in New England. The people of that northern country have their passions more under the command of reason and interest than in the southern latitudes, where a warmer sun excites a greater degree of irascibility. One rash, offensive action against the royal forces at that early period, though successful, might have done great mischief to the cause of America. It would have lost them European friends, and weakened the disposition of the other colonies to assist them. The patient and the politic New England men, fully sensible of their situation, submitted to many insults, and bridled their resentment.

And he also says:—

It was one of the peculiarities of these new forms of government, that all religious establishments were abolished.<sup>1</sup>

They were so in the southern States, but this is obstinately refused in New England, to their unspeakable shame in foreign parts. Yea, the example of our Lord and Saviour is here openly rejected, lest their darling traditions should come down.

<sup>1</sup>Ramsay's History of the American Revolution, Vol. I, pp. 186, 355.

For in January, 1790, a book was published in Boston, entitled, "The Baptism of Jesus Christ not to be imitated by Christians." It was written by two ministers in the county of Worcester. Their argument is, that John was a priest in the church of Israel, and that when he baptized Jesus, he initiated him into the office of the priesthood, to make atonement for sin, which none can do but the Son of God. And they say, "It will not be denied by any, that the words *washing* and *baptism* are of like import. . . . The baptism of Christ then must be considered as the fulfilment of the law of priestly consecration." Yet as Aaron and his sons were to wash their hands and feet, these men say, "Is it not almost certain that Christ was not plunged all over in water?"<sup>1</sup> Answer. Moses was to bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle, and to wash them with water. This was done once by Moses, at their consecration. But Aaron and his sons were to wash their own hands and feet, from time to time. Exod. xxix. 4; xxx. 19, 21; Lev. viii. 6. In the first case there is no mention of hands and feet. Moses washed them all over. But if washing their hands and feet was baptism, then Aaron and his sons were *Anabaptists*. Yea, and they baptized themselves too, which is opposite to all ideas of gospel baptism. Neither had John any right by the law of Moses to consecrate Jesus as a priest in the Hebrew church. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident; for that after the similitude of Melchizedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Yea, he is of an order above Abraham; and the priesthood of Aaron is disannulled. Heb. vii. 5—19. And his children say joyfully to him, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast

<sup>1</sup>Essay of Fish and Crane, [Rev. Elisha Fish, of Upton, and Rev. John Crane, of Northbridge,] pp. 8, 20.

redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God *kings* and *priests*, and we shall reign on the earth. Rev. v. 9, 10. So Peter says to all who are born again, Ye are a chosen generation, a *royal priesthood*, a holy nation, a peculiar people. I Pet. ii. 9. By the death of Christ he disannulled all claims to power by natural birth, and united the great offices of priests and kings in his church, in those who are born of the Spirit. Jesus is the only lawgiver for his church, and his children are the only executors thereof in his name. And God says, Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily ; and ye are complete in him, who is the *Head* of all principality and power. In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ ; *buried with him in baptism*, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Col. ii. 8—12. Yet philosophy and vain deceit have prevailed so long, that it is now denied that Christians should imitate the baptism of Christ, because the ceremonial law was not abolished until his death. But the same men hold infant baptism from the covenant of circumcision, which was the foundation of the national church of Israel. Yea, Mr. Fish, one of the authors of this book, published one before, in 1772, which he called Japheth dwelling in the tents of Shem, from Gen. ix. 27 ; in which he went back ten generations before Abraham, for a warrant for infant baptism. And their essay now, to prove that the baptism of Christ is not to be imitated by Christians, hath been so pleasing to the world, that it hath passed three editions.

And the folly of men in other respects is daily exposed. For the law in Connecticut, called, “ An act for securing the



rights of conscience in matters of religion, to Christians of every denomination in this State," proved to be so ineffectual to their purpose, that they made an addition thereto in May, 1791. By this addition no certificate could be legal, until it was approbated by two justices of the peace, or only by one if there was no more in the town where the dissenter lived. Thus the civil authority in the uppermost religious party in their State, was to judge the consciences of all men who dissented from their worship. And when they had done it, the act says :—

Which certificate, upon being lodged with the clerk of the ecclesiastical society in which such dissenter dwells, shall thereafter, so long as he shall attend the public worship of the church or congregation to which he has joined himself, and shall continue to pay such his proportion towards the support of the public worship and ministry thereof, exempt him from all civil obligation to the society from which he dissents, excepting taxes granted before the time such certificate is lodged with the clerk of said society as aforesaid.

And this is a plain imitation of the British parliament, who resolved in 1775, that they would not tax any colony in America, who should raise as much money among themselves for the support of government, as the parliament judged that they ought to, as long as they did so, and no longer. But as God hath delivered us from that tyranny, how can any submit to a like tyranny over the consciences of men? For a freehold rated at fifty shillings, or forty pounds in the common list, gives every inhabitant in Connecticut the power of voting for their legislature, and makes him eligible to it. And all the privilege that their churches have, in the choice and support of their ministers, is, that communicants may vote with the rest of the congregation in these affairs, if they have not so much estate as is required of voters for rulers, and are twenty-one years of age. But a great part of their ministers and churches readily receive persons into their communion, without any evidence of their being born again. And for one party of such men to assume

the power of judging the consciences of all who dissented from their worship, alarmed many in all parts of the government, and they drew up a remonstrance and petition, in which they said :—

We cannot find that Jesus Christ or his apostles ever gave orders to civil rulers to establish the Christian religion at large, much less one distinguished denomination, who profess it, and use the civil law to support its doctrines, forms or preachers; or that the subjects of Christ's kingdom (which is not of this world) should acknowledge any ruler but Christ alone, in religious concerns. And we long to see religion left entirely in the hands of Christ, to be governed alone by his laws; that the grand controversy may be decided, whether religion is such an adjective that it cannot stand of itself, or so important that it will support itself upon its own merits, and all who trust in it.

This produced a repeal of said law, in October, 1791; though they then made another, to allow every man to give in his own certificate, if he dissented from the ruling sect.

The uppermost party among Christians have ever had the command of all colleges, to educate religious teachers, as well as other men of superior learning, until very lately. Even in 1780, no ministers but Congregational ministers were allowed to be overseers of the university at Cambridge, by the Massachusetts constitution of government. And great sums have been given to that university by the government, from time to time, ever since it began in 1638. But as Providence and Rhode Island colony was planted by men who were banished from the Massachusetts, because they conscientiously dissented from the use of force in religious affairs, and that colony suffered amazingly from neighboring colonies for more than a hundred years, the people therein have grown up with great prejudices against colleges, and against obeying the laws of Christ for the support of his ministers. But as a minister died this year,<sup>1</sup> who has done much towards removing those prejudices, I shall give a concise account of the affair. Mr. Isaac Eaton, who

<sup>1</sup>Rev. James Manning, D. D. See notice of him in a later chapter.—ED.

was pastor of the Baptist church in Hopewell in New Jersey, from 1748 to 1772, set up a school for the education of youth for the ministry, as well as for other callings, in 1756, and kept it for eleven years.<sup>1</sup> One of his scholars was Mr. James Manning, who went from his school to the college at Princeton, where he took his first degree in September, 1762. And as the Philadelphia Association were for erecting a college in Rhode Island government, they fixed their eyes upon him as a proper leader in the affair. He therefore called in at Newport, on his voyage to Halifax, in July, 1763, and proposed the matter to a number of Baptist gentlemen, who readily concurred therewith; and as they had a high opinion of a learned Congregational minister among them,<sup>2</sup> they desired him to make a draft of a charter for a college in that government. It was proposed to take in some members of the several denominations among them, but that the Baptists should always be the majority of the corporation. He drew a charter which appeared to be upon this plan, and it was introduced into their legislature; but a Baptist gentleman discerned that there was a door left open for the Congregational denomination to become the majority hereafter. Therefore the charter was not then passed into a law; and when their legislature met again, the charter was not to be found. When this was heard of at Philadelphia, two gentlemen were sent from thence, who assisted in drawing a new charter, which was established by the legislature of Rhode Island in February, 1764;<sup>3</sup> and Mr. Manning re-

<sup>1</sup>See account of Mr. Eaton and of his school, in Manning and Brown University, pp. 25, 26.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. Ezra Stiles, D. D., afterwards President of Yale College.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>Hon. Daniel Jenckes.

For a full confirmation of the above account, and for farther developments in the strange history of the chartering of Rhode Island College, see the testimony of President Manning and of Hon. Daniel Jenckes, the copy of the charter drafted by Rev. Dr. Stiles, and other evidence, in Manning and Brown University. pp. 46—62, 465—482. The author of that work, Mr. R. A. Guild, Librarian of Brown University, after giving the various testimonies, carefully sums them up as follows:—

“From the foregoing accounts or narratives, it appears, (1.) That President Manning drew up a plan of the college, and presented it to a company of Baptist



moved to Warren in the summer following, to preach to a Baptist church newly formed there, and to begin the school.

In September, 1765, he was chosen president of the college, and diligently attended to the duties thereof, and seven young gentlemen took their first degree there, September 7, 1769. One of them<sup>1</sup> was afterwards a member of Congress, and then a general in the American army, and lastly a judge of the courts in our western territory, where he died. Three of them are now useful Baptist ministers.<sup>2</sup> In February,

gentlemen at Newport, in the month of July, 1763. (2.) That the Hon. Josias Lyndon and Colonel Job Bennet were appointed to draw a charter, in accordance with said plan, to be laid before the next General Assembly, with a petition that it might be made a law. (3.) That the assistance of Rev. Dr. Stiles, afterwards President of Yale College, was solicited and obtained. (4.) That the drafting of the charter was left entirely to Dr. Stiles; and that he, in turn, was assisted by the Hon. William Ellery. (5.) That the charter was accordingly drawn, and a time and place were appointed for the parties concerned to meet and hear it read. (6.) That Manning being obliged to leave on that day for Halifax, was unable to be with the committee long enough to see whether the original design was secured, and that the Baptists, being satisfied, without sufficient examination into the authority vested in the Fellowship, and reposing entire confidence in Dr. Stiles, agreed to join in a petition to the General Assembly, to have the charter confirmed by authority. (7.) That the petition and charter were accordingly presented to the General Assembly in August, 1663, but that action thereon was postponed until the next session, through the influence of the Hon. Daniel Jenckes, the attempts of Mr. Ellery and others, of the Presbyterians to the contrary notwithstanding. (8.) That the charter was found, on inspection, to be so drawn as to vest the main power and direction of the institution in a board of twelve Fellows, eight of whom were to be Presbyterians, and the other four of the same denomination, for aught that appeared to the contrary: and that, in general, it did not answer to the original design. (9.) That, in this emergency, application was made to the Philadelphia Association, 'where the thing took its rise,' to have their mind on the subject. (10.) That they immediately sent to Newport the Rev. Samuel Jones, who was accompanied by Robert Strettle Jones, and that, when they arrived, Dr. Eyres, of Newport, was added to the Committee. (11.) That, meanwhile, the original copy of the charter, presented to the General Assembly in August, which had been intrusted by that body to Mr. Jenckes, had been lost. (12.) That the Committee found at Newport a rough draft of a charter, which they happily remodelled, and that the most material alterations were, appointing the same number of Baptists in the Fellowship that had been appointed of the Presbyterians by Dr. Stiles; settling the presidency in the Baptist society? adding five Baptists to the Trustees; putting more Episcopalians than Presbyterians in the corporation; and extending the membership of the corporation to persons residing out of the colony or State."—ED.

<sup>1</sup>Hon. James Mitchell Varnum.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. William Rogers, D. D., Rev. Charles Thompson, and Rev. William Williams.—ED.

1770, the corporation concluded to remove the college to Providence, where a large brick house was erected for the purpose, entirely by personal generosity; and education was well carried on there, until the British troops came to Newport in December, 1776, and our army came to Providence to oppose them, and used the college edifice as a barrack. After these obstructions were removed, President Manning engaged again in the work of education for a little while, and then said edifice was seized, by the order of a council of war, for a French hospital, on Lord's day, June 25, 1780, while Dr. Manning was gone to preach in town, and they held it till May 27, 1782. And although no government upon earth ever gave any thing towards that building, yet no recompense has ever been obtained for the great damages which were done to it by government.<sup>1</sup> However, President Manning, being encouraged by the friends of the college, heartily engaged again in his public work, and learning flourished under his administrations, and the Baptist church in Providence enjoyed many blessings under his ministry, until he was suddenly called out of our world, July 29, 1791, in the fifty-third year of his age. He was so well esteemed in the government, that he was elected a delegate to Congress in the spring of 1786, which office he accepted for six months, in hopes of obtaining a grant from thence to indemnify the college at Providence. But though he was highly esteemed in that honorable body, yet it was then out of their power to do justice in this case, as well as many others. Neither could President Manning obtain the whole of his salary for many years, which was to be paid out of the interest of money that was collected elsewhere, and was lent to Rhode Island government. His perseverance, therefore, in the midst of so many difficulties, and his rising above them all in faithfulness and kindness, will endear his memory

<sup>1</sup>There is some hope of it soon from Congress.—B.

Remuneration to the extent, according to Benedict, of two thousand dollars, was made by act of Congress, April 16, 1800. Benedict's History of the Baptists, Vol. II, p. 447; Manning and Brown University, p. 388.—ED.

to the latest posterity. And these things demonstrate to all men, that the principles of believers' baptism, and of equal liberty of conscience, are more friendly to true learning and knowledge, than any party schemes of religion ever were, or ever can be. For all loving of self above God and our neighbors, though covered with a mask of religion or government, can never make the subjects of it willing to have their real character seen.

And how is this love of self now exposed in our country? For the first Congress upon our new constitution met in March, 1789, and made laws to regulate the trade of America, which revived public credit, and the merchandise of this country was carried round the world. Also the creditors of government were encouraged to bring in their notes to the loan offices that were appointed in each State, where the interest of said notes was cast up to the close of 1791; after which new notes were given out, of three denominations. The first were to carry the interest which was formerly promised, the second but half so much, and the third were to pay no interest at all for ten years. But who would trust any single man in the world, if he should act in this manner? Surely no man upon earth could obtain credit and esteem in such a way. And our Lord Jesus Christ, who requires the gospel ministry to be committed to faithful men, says, If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself. II Tim. ii. 2—13. This is the only line of succession for his ministers. But deceitful men in every station imagine that the security of a whole government is so much stronger than the promises of individuals, that they say, Cast in thy lot among us, let us all have one purse. . . . Their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. This God says of all the world. Prov. i. 14, 16; Rom. iii. 15, 19. How vain then are all the arguments which are advanced against the universal depravity of



mankind! Yea, or against the power of God in changing the heart, who says, Turn ye at my reproof; behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, and will make known my words unto you. But all men who hate knowledge, and will not choose the fear of the Lord in this life, will cry in vain for mercy, when destruction cometh as a whirlwind. Prov. i. 23—29. The several funding systems established by government, as well as supporting religious teachers by compulsion, have been productive of oppression and injustice; and Jehovah says, Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil. Isa. xxxiii. 13—15. This is the only way of safety and happiness. But how opposite hereto were the following actions?

A Baptist church was formed in Barnstable in June, 1771, and when they had given in certificates to the ruling sect, they were generally exempted from taxes to their ministers for ten years. But a fresh revival of religion came on among them in the beginning of 1781, and increased their church and society, until they built a convenient meeting-house, and then ordained a pastor, December 4, 1788. He had preached to them for four years before he was ordained, yet in that time, with three years after, above a hundred and fifty dollars were extorted from that society, for the Congregational ministers of the first parishes in Barnstable and Yarmouth. In January, 1790, a collector in Barnstable took away a good horse from one of the committee of that Baptist society, for a ministerial tax of less than two dollars; and though he offered to return a small part of the value of the horse, yet the Baptist gentleman refused to receive it, and

so to have fellowship with their works of darkness. But those cruel oppressions were pursued, until the committee of the Warren Association met at Boston, January 24, 1791, and wrote to the officers of those two parishes in such a manner, that they have generally refrained from taxing the Baptists to Congregational ministers since,<sup>1</sup> though they have not returned the money which they had before unjustly taken from them. The west parish in Barnstable, and many others through the country, have not made distress upon the Baptists for the support of parish ministers, as these have done. And our rulers give Baptist ministers the same power to

<sup>1</sup>This letter is a good illustration of the boldness and vigor with which Baptists of that day were accustomed to assert their rights. It is as follows:—

“GENTLEMEN:—The Baptist church in Barnstable belongs to the Association of regular churches, and as such, claims the advice and protection of the whole body, so far as their case requires it and they have power to afford it. By the Warren Association at their meeting in September last, we were appointed a Standing Committee, to which all churches of our denomination in this Commonwealth are to apply for advice and assistance when oppressed on a religious account. Having therefore received a well attested account from Barnstable, that some of the members of our society have been repeatedly taxed and their property taken from them to support the Congregational minister of that place, from whom they conscientiously dissent, and though they have a minister of their own to maintain, we, the committee of the Baptist churches, think it our duty to say, that in an age and country as much enlightened as this is, such acts of injustice were not to be expected; and in all companies in which the affair has been mentioned, it has been a matter of astonishment. As a denomination of Christians we stand on an equal footing with any in the Commonwealth, and this equality we mean to maintain, by every proper method in our power. If the parish refuse to return the moneys taken from our society, and continue to tax them to the support of the Congregational minister of Barnstable, we shall be reduced to the disagreeable necessity of publishing the whole to the world, and of taking such other steps as shall appear to us necessary.

“It is our most earnest wish that the different denominations of Christians throughout the Commonwealth may live together in love and friendship, agreeable to the spirit of the gospel.

We are, with sentiments of respect, yours, &c.,

SAMUEL STILLMAN,	} Committee.
ISAAC BACKUS,	
THOMAS BALDWIN,	
THOMAS GREEN,	
JOSEPH GRAFTON,	

“Boston, January 24, 1791.

“To the Gentlemen, the Committee of the First Parish in Barnstable.”

“The like,” adds Mr. Backus, “was sent to the Committee of the First Parish in Yarmouth.” Backus’s Manuscripts.—ED.

marry people, and to be exempted from civil taxes, that they do to other ministers. But they have not yet gone so far as a king of Persia did, who gave liberally for the house of God out of his own treasures, and exempted the ministers of the sanctuary from civil taxes, without imposing any ministerial tax upon the people. Ezra vii. 11—24. And we have no evidence that God ever allowed any rulers in Israel to use any secular force for the support of his priests in their church ; but when two priests sent their servants to the people with this language, Thou shalt give it now ; and if not, I will take it by *force*, they were both slain in one day, and their father's neck was broken. For God had said, Them that honor me, I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. I Sam. ii. 16, 30 ; iv. 11, 18. And how far are teachers from honoring our Lord Jesus Christ, if they refuse to be content with all the good things that his laws and influence will give them !

• Imprisonments and spoiling of goods, for the support of Congregational ministers in Rehoboth, for thirty years, had brought that sect to be the minor part of the inhabitants of the town ; therefore they obtained liberty to sell their ministerial lands, and an act of our legislature in 1762, to incorporate the committee who should be annually elected in each parish, to manage that fund of money, and what should be added to it by subscription, so that the interest thereof might support their ministers. And it was supposed that as long as this act continued in force, they had no right to tax all the inhabitants to them, as they had before done. And this appeared the more necessary, because Mr. Samuel Peck was ordained the pastor of a Congregational church in Rehoboth, October 8, 1751, who refused to have any fellowship with those who used tax and compulsion in that affair ; and he ministered to them until he died November 26, 1788, aged eighty-two. But the sinking of our public credit, and other means, brought their fund of money in the first parish in Rehoboth down to less than six hundred pounds ; and as



Mr. John Ellis was installed their minister in March, 1785, with a promise of a salary of a hundred pounds a year, they ventured to tax all the inhabitants to pay it, though he was not elected by a third part of them. And as they paid but little more than the salary of one year in five, he sued the parish for the rest, and recovered judgment against them in March, 1791. But they appealed to the superior court in October following; and they called a parish meeting in September, and offered the use of their meeting-house, and of their fund of money to Mr. Ellis's party, as long as he continued their minister, if they would pay off that debt, and support him, without taxing any who did not choose him; and adjourned for three weeks. But as this offer was not accepted, at their next meeting, fifty voters against fourteen voted to shut him out of their meeting-house, and chose a special committee to get Baptist ministers to preach therein. And as they had not got any Baptist minister to preach in it the first Lord's day after he was shut out, he came and demanded it to be opened, before two justices of the peace; and because it was not opened they published an account of it in the Providence newspapers, and called the men *insurgents*<sup>1</sup> who shut him out. The next Lord's day, while a Baptist minister was in the pulpit, he came and interrupted the public worship of God; but he was brought before a justice of peace therefor, and bound to his good behavior till the next March court, and Baptist ministers preached in the house all that time. In March, he, with difficulty, obtained a release from those bonds, though he could not recover his former place of worship. Therefore his party applied to our legislature in June, 1792, and obtained a repeal of the act of 1762, which invested their parish committee with power to manage their fund of money, and an act to incorporate his party as the Congregational society in the first precinct in Rehoboth. But as they did not obtain the meeting-house nor fund of money thereby, they called a special court for

<sup>1</sup>A name given to those who resisted our courts in 1786.

that purpose, August 30, 1792 ; yet judgment was then given against them, which they were so far from yielding to, that they rushed into the meeting house the next Lord's day, and some of them continued in it night and day for a fortnight ; though others also stayed there and prevented their getting possession of the house. Afterwards Ellis's party called another special court, who gave them possession of said house.

Now can any man believe, that such proceedings as these have any tendency to promote piety, religion or morality ? Yea, are they not as contrary thereto as darkness is to light ? And these are the natural effects of supporting religious ministers by force. Neither would that little party at Rehoboth have been able to go so far as they have done, if rulers and ministers in general had not viewed it as their own cause. For if one congregation can shut their minister out of their meeting-house when they think proper, another may also, and supporting worship by force will be excluded from our land. And though many have reflected on the Baptists, because that society in Rehoboth called them in to assist in their worship, and to exclude oppressors ; yet the first parishes in Rochester and Wrentham have shut their ministers also out of their meeting-houses, without any concern with the Baptists therein. And it daily appears, that the ruling party in our land, as well as through the world, are trying to grasp the honors and profits of religion to themselves, while they deny the power of godliness. And the doctrines of grace, and the order of the first churches in New England, are trampled upon through the country. Of this we have a notable instance in the town of Taunton, the shire-town of Bristol county. As a number of leading men in that town disliked the preaching of their minister, they informed the parish that they had no right to vote him any salary, because they were the minor part of the inhabitants of the town ; and, after several meetings, a council was called, and he was dismissed, near the close of 1790. After

which they obtained an incorporation as the Congregational society in Taunton, with power to settle and support ministers by tax and compulsion ; only if any man therein desired to withdraw from them, he might go to their clerk at the end of the year, and get his name out of the list, and be free from them for the future. But any number of men can form a stronger society than this, without putting our government to such vast costs as have been laid upon us in such affairs. And it soon appeared, that said society and the first Congregational church in Taunton could not agree in calling another minister ; therefore another church was formed, in open separation from the first church in Taunton, and they called a minister who was so disagreeable to the first church, that they went and built another meeting-house, and called another minister to preach to them. But the new party sent for two ministers out of Boston, and obtained ten more from various parts of the country, to give a sanction to their proceedings. And in a Boston paper of May 25, 1792, it was said, " Wednesday, the 16th instant, the Rev. John Foster was installed to the pastoral care of the first Congregational church and society in Taunton." And the same was declared in a Providence paper ; though the church in which he was installed was constituted that year, and the society the year before. And was not this lying in religious affairs ? and in the winter following a church was formed in Pomfret in Connecticut, and a minister was ordained therein, in open separation from the first church in that town.

Yet in the Election Sermon at Boston, May 30, 1792, the ministers in general, who are supported by law in our country, are called, " The Christian priesthood."<sup>1</sup> And a book was published there this year, the whole labor whereof was to prove that all the children of professors of Christianity are born in the church, and ought to come to the Lord's Supper, if they are not openly scandalous, whether they are satis-

<sup>1</sup>Tappan's Sermon, p. 9.



fied that they are born again, or not. And the author says, "It is the will of God that many be admitted into the church who are *not in heart* friends to him. And if the greater part be of this character, can we imagine that the true interests of Christ's kingdom are in any danger, while Christ has his *enemies* as much in his power as any, and can use them as his instruments, or restrain them, or make them his willing people, or cut them off, whenever he pleases?"<sup>1</sup> It is readily granted that Christ has all the world under his power, but his revealed will requires a profession of saving faith of all who are received into his church; and they who imagine that he allows his *enemies* to come into it, implicitly put him beneath all rational men. For all such men, be they never so deceitful themselves, yet endeavor to guard against enemies in their own families and societies. And Jesus says, I am the *door*: by me if any man enter in, he shall be *saved*. But he assures us, that they who climb up some other way are *thieves* and *robbers*. John x. 1—9. And he requires us to contend earnestly for the faith, against men who *creep* in unawares, and turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness. Jude 3, 4. Yet another book, which had six editions in about two years, received the sixth edition at Boston, in the beginning of 1793, which represents all ministers among us who were not ordained by ministers who received their office power by succession from Europe, as wolves in sheep's clothing. And the author says, "It is by no means necessary, that, by historical deduction, we should prove an uninterrupted succession; we have a right to presume it until evidence appears to the contrary. If any say, the succession has failed, the burthen of proof must lie wholly on them. . . . It is well known that the first ministers in the country were ordained in England by men whose authority is not controverted."<sup>2</sup> Thus he builds his scheme upon negatives; but God says, Who hath required this at your hand to tread

<sup>1</sup>Hemmenway's Discourse, concerning the church, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup>Lathrop's Discourses on Matt. vii. 15, 16, pp. 56, 63.

my courts? . . . . Your hands are full of *blood*. Is. i. 12, 15. And how much hath this been the character of all national churches? And can *bloody* hands convey the Holy Ghost to others?<sup>1</sup>

After the Babylonian captivity, the priests who could not shew a register of their lawful descent from Aaron, were, as polluted, put from the priesthood, until a priest stood up with Urim and Thummim. Ezra ii. 62, 63. The words signify *light* and *perfection*, which is found only in the Son of God, who is the author of eternal salvation unto all them who obey him. And to such it is said, Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto *perfection*; not laying again the *foundation* of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. Heb. v. 5—9; vi. 1, 2. Now the principles of repentance from dead works, of faith in the Son of God, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment, were never known by men but by pure revelation from God; and the same is true of regeneration, and of justification by our sins being laid upon Christ our sacrifice. For God saves us by the *washing* of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Titus iii. 5, 6. And the word *Baptisms*, here in the sixth chapter, is rendered *Washings* in the ninth, which speaks of a more *perfect* tabernacle, in which Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, to purge the conscience

<sup>1</sup>An eminent author who lately lived in Italy, the head of the church of Rome, says: "To the art of printing it is owing, that the atrocious crimes of our ancestors, who were alternately slaves and tyrants, are become less frequent. . . . They may contemplate the effects of what was so improperly called ancient simplicity and good faith; humanity groaning under implacable superstition, the avarice and ambition of a few staining with human blood the thrones and palaces of kings, secret treasons, and public massacres, every noble a tyrant over the people, and the ministers of [the gospel of] Christ bathing their hands in blood, in the name of the God of all mercy." The Marquis Beccaria on Crimes and Punishments, pp. 25, 26. Yet an external succession of ministerial power, through all that blood and wickedness, is still held fast by many in Europe and America.

from dead works to serve the living God. For by one offering he hath *perfected* forever them that are sanctified. Heb. ix. 10—14; x. 14. God required the *laying on of hands* upon offerings for sin, not less than nine times in the law of Moses. Levit. i. 4; iii. 2, 8, 13; iv. 4, 15, 29; xvi. 21; Numb. viii. 12. And an inspired prophet says, All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord *laid on him* the iniquity of us all. Is. liii. 6. And Jesus said, I lay down my life for the sheep. John x. 15. And Peter says, His own self *bare our sins* in his own body on the tree. I Peter ii. 24. And this *foundation* is never to be *laid again*. The gospel ordinance of baptism is always in the singular number, but the washings under the law were many. And God says to his children, There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Eph. iv. 4—6. But the holding to an external laying on of hands upon officers, as a foundation point in ministerial authority, hath made them lords over God's heritage, in every age, and in every country where the Christian name hath been known. And holding to the laying on of hands upon every member, after baptism, has caused great divisions among the Baptists, which should put all upon examination of this point. Laying on of hands upon officers in ordination, is no more than a solemn swearing of them to be faithful in their work, and civil rulers are also inducted into their offices by an oath, after the people have given them their power, which they can take away again at appointed times. And this was the original plan of the Congregational churches in New England; only none were allowed to give ministers their power, but those who were judged to be real Christians.

The first church in Dorchester, with Mr. Wareham, their minister, removed up to Windsor, and began the colony of Connecticut, in 1635, in which year Mr. Richard Mather



came over to Dorchester. And on April 11, 1636, a meeting was held there for the purpose of gathering a new church; but it was not then done, because the rulers and ministers present were not satisfied with the experiences of the most of the persons who were to be of the church. Says Winthrop:—

Most of them had burdened their comfort of salvation upon unsound grounds, viz., some upon dreams and ravishes of spirit by fits; others upon the reformation of their lives; others upon duties and performances, &c.; wherein they discovered three special errors. 1. That they had not come to hate sin because it was filthy, but only left it because it was hurtful. 2. That by reason of this they had never truly closed with Christ (or rather Christ with them) but had made use of him only to help the imperfection of their sanctification and duties, and not made him their sanctification, wisdom, &c. 3. They expected to believe by some power of their own, and not only and wholly from Christ.<sup>1</sup>

And in 1639, their legislature punished a minister and some people at Weymouth severely, for attempting to gather a church there, in which “all baptized ones might communicate without any farther trial of them.”<sup>2</sup> This account was given by Governor Winthrop, one of the greatest and best men then in New England. And as no men had a vote in the choice of ministers but communicants in their churches, so they held the power of ordination to be in each church. Mr. Cotton said:—

The power of the ministerial calling is derived chiefly from Christ, furnishing his servants with gifts fit for the calling; and nextly from the church (or congregation) who, observing such whom the Lord hath gifted, do elect and call them forth to come and help them.

Again he says:—

Though it be our manner (and as we believe according to the word) that every church chooseth and calleth their own ministers, and ordaineth them by the presbytery of the same church; yet if the presbytery of other churches commend a minister to a vacant church, and upon the acceptance of the church, if the presbyters of those churches do ordain him, with the consent of the church, we do not profess that this is no calling of Christ, or that these are no ministers of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Winthrop's Journal, p. 98. [Vol. I, p. 184.]

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 171. [Vol. I, pp. 387, 388.]—B. See also, Vol. I, p. 94.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>Answer to Williams, Part Second, 1647, pp. 82, 131.

And the next year they said in the Cambridge Platform:—

In such churches where there are elders, imposition of hands in ordination is to be performed by those elders. In such churches where there are no elders, imposition of hands may be performed by some of the brethren orderly chosen by the church thereunto. . . . Nevertheless, in such churches where there are no elders, and the church so desire, we see not why imposition of hands may not be performed by the elders of other churches.

They also say:—

In case an elder offend incorrigibly, the matter so requiring, as the church had power to call him to office, so they have power according to order (the council of other churches, where it may be had, directing thereto) to remove him from his office.<sup>1</sup>

Now it is a known rule in grammar, that though a parenthesis is useful in its place, yet the sense is complete without it. But in our day, most of those who are called Congregational ministers, deny the church's power to ordain or dismiss them, unless a mutual council direct thereto. Thus they have gone off from the first principles of Congregational churches, while they hold the name for worldly ends. But Mr. William Hubbard, in his manuscript history, written in 1680, says:—

There is no jurisdiction, to which, as such, particular churches are or ought to be subject (be it placed in classis or synod) by way of authoritative censure, nor any church power, extrinsecal to the said churches, which they ought to have dependence upon any other sort of men for the exercise of.<sup>2</sup>

And Mr. Jonathan Mitchel of Cambridge, had before said:—

The over-enlarging of full communion, or admission of persons thereto, upon slight qualifications, without insisting upon the practical and spiritual part of religion, will not only lose the power of godliness, but in a little time bring in profaneness, and ruin the churches, these two ways: 1. Election of ministers, will soon be carried by a formal looser sort. 2. The exercise of discipline will by this means be rendered impossible. Discipline failing, profaneness riseth like a flood. For the major part, wanting zeal against sin, will foster licentiousness. It is not setting down good rules

<sup>1</sup>Platform, Chapters, IX, X. [Magnalia, Vol. II, pp. 191, 192.]

<sup>2</sup>Hubbard, p. 184.—Ed.

and directions, that will salve it; for the specification of government is from men, not from laws. Let never so good a form of government be agreed upon, it will soon degenerate, if the instruments who manage it be not good.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Mitchel died in 1668, when he had no idea of their admitting any men to a governing vote for pastors of churches, but communicants therein; and he gave these weighty reasons against receiving any to communion without good evidence of their being godly persons; and Dr. Increase Mather dedicated these things to the college at Cambridge in 1697, of which he was then president. And how can any men reasonably complain of the Baptists for their holding fast the good principles of our fathers, and renouncing their mistakes? Especially the laying of bands upon children before they could choose for themselves, and forcing all to support such worship? Had it not been for these two evils, the characters of the fathers of New England would outshine almost any men who have lived in latter ages. Indeed the fathers of Plymouth colony renounced all the use of force to support their ministers.

<sup>1</sup>Dedication of Mitchel's Life, pp. 17, 18. [Magnalia, Vol. II, p. 59.]



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

THEY WHO DENY INFANT BAPTISM ARE COMPARED TO BALAAM.—EVIDENCE THAT THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION IS REPEALED.—THE ERROR OF BALAAM DESCRIBED.—MISTAKES OF GOOD MEN CORRECTED.—THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM OPENED.—CORRUPTIONS AT PROVIDENCE EXPOSED.—AND ALSO AT ROCHESTER.—THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING THE GOVERNMENTS OF CHURCH AND STATE DISTINCT.—TYRANNICAL POWER GROWS WEAKER IN OUR LAND.—MARKS OF FALSE TEACHERS CONSIDERED.—EXTRACTS FROM WILLIAMS AND COTTON.—AND FROM MATHER, ABOUT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.—A CONCISE VIEW OF THE PRESENT STATE OF GOVERNMENT AND RELIGION.—MANY PRACTICALLY DENY THAT CHRIST IS COME.

Having described the first principles of Congregational churches, let us see how they are now held by eminent men. A book was published in Boston in the beginning of 1793, which has had a most rapid sale, wherein are the following things. The author says :—

The apostles, when they first began to administer Christian baptism, and form a church, baptized none but such who gladly received the word. Acts ii. 41. When the eunuch desired to be baptized, Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. Acts viii. 37. This implies that he was not qualified for baptism, or a fit subject of that ordinance, unless he were a true believer in Christ ; and that he could not baptize him, unless he professed and appeared to be such a believer.<sup>1</sup>

But in order to find a warrant for infant baptism, he goes back to the covenant of circumcision which God made with

<sup>1</sup>The System of Doctrines, contained in divine revelation, explained and defended. By Samuel Hopkins, D. D., pastor of the First Congregational church in Newport, Vol. II, p. 306. [The Works of Samuel Hopkins, D. D., Boston ; Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1854 ; Vol. II, p. 101.]

Abraham, and holds that it never was repealed. And, after much labor to prove this point, he says :—

They who are expecting and demanding, that Christ or his apostles should expressly renew and enjoin on Christians, the appointment and command of God, to apply to the infants of believers the initiating seal of the covenant, in order to warrant men to do it ; refusing to acquiesce in the decision of this point, which God had already made ; *if the argument above be conclusive*, are imitating Balaam, who did not rest satisfied with the decision which God had once made, respecting his going to curse Israel, but expected and required that God should speak again, if he did really forbid his doing it.<sup>1</sup>

These are the words of a minister who hath made such additions to Calvinism that his plan is called Hopkintonianism through America. And *if his argument is conclusive*, the Baptists are some of the worst men upon earth, as Balaam was such a one. But if he is entirely mistaken, and God has disannulled the national covenant which he made with Abraham, it is very hurtful for any to hold the contrary. It is therefore of great importance for all to have right ideas of this subject. And the following considerations are offered for that end :—

First, Abraham had no right to circumcise any stranger, until he had bought him as a servant for money. Gen. xvii. 12, 13. But God says to his children, Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men. I Cor. vii. 23. And he says to his ministers, Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts xx. 28. He also says, Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money. And this is the gospel of peace. Is. lii. 3, 7 ; Rom. x. 15. Thus do the apostles explain the prophets. Secondly, The children of Israel had no right to receive strangers into the church by households, until the day in which they came out of Egypt, when the passover was instituted. And then God said, Every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circum-

<sup>1</sup>Hopkins's System, Vol. I, p. 318, margin. [Works of Samuel Hopkins, D. D., Vol. II, p. 109.]

cised him, then shall he eat thereof. Exod. xii. 44—48. Circumcision and the passover were as binding upon servants as children; and both ordinances pointed to the blood of Christ, which he was to shed for his people. And in reference to that, God said, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt. Jer. xxxi. 31, 32. And an inspired apostle says, In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. Heb. viii. 7—13; x. 9. And can *old* and *new*, *first* and *second*, mean but one covenant? Surely no. Thirdly, *Circumcision* is the name which God gave to his covenant with Abraham. Acts vii. 8. And though Jews and Mahometans are still zealous for it, yet all Christians allow that circumcision is repealed. But after the apostolic age, men took away the name which God gave to that covenant, and added the name *Grace* to it; and they held that dominion is founded in grace. And from thence the nations have made merchandise of all the vanities of time, and of slaves and souls of men. But the plagues of Babylon will come upon all men who add to the word of God, and take away from the words of his book, if they refuse to come out of that practice. Rev. xviii. 4—13; xxii. 18, 19. And there is not a word in all the Bible for bringing any child to baptism without his own profession of faith in Christ; nor for forcing any man to support any religious minister; and all national churches are built upon these two superstitions. Fourthly, Circumcision was the shedding of human blood; and when Abraham received it, it was a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he before had in Christ, in whom believers are justified by his blood. Rom. iv. 11, 23; v. 9; Gal. iii. 16; Gen. xv. 6; xvii. 24. It was a seal to him;



but neither circumcision nor baptism are ever called seals to any other person in all the Bible. But God says to true believers in Christ, In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. And he also says, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Eph. i. 13 ; iv. 30. After believing in Christ, the Holy Spirit seals the merits of his death, and the promises of his grace to the soul. And all believers from the beginning, looked through the bloody ordinances which God appointed, to the blood of Christ for justification. And after the beast arose out of the bottomless pit, God said, All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Rev. xiii. 8. Force and cruelty is the general character of the beast ; but Jesus, who is the root and offspring of David, will cause all evil beasts to cease out of the land. Ezek. xxxiv. 4, 25 ; Rev. xxii. 16. Fifthly, The believing Jews were suffered to go on in circumcision for a number of years after the death of Christ, and then God said to them, If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. . . . Whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace. Gal. v. 2—4. So far was the covenant of circumcision from being the covenant of grace. That bloody sign not only pointed to the death of Christ, but also to the death of all true believers in him. Therefore Paul says, I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. . . . The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. Gal. ii. 19, 20 ; v. 22—24. Adam and Christ are the only two public heads of mankind, as to the

great affairs of the soul and eternity. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners ; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. Rom. v. 19. For parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is of infinite importance ; but we can find no warrant for any to bring them to baptism without a personal profession of faith in Christ.

Let us now inquire what was the error of Balaam ? When God took the nation of Israel to be his church, he was an husband unto them. Jer. xxxi. 32. And Moses said unto him, If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight ? is it not in that thou goest with us ? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. Exod. xxxiii. 15, 16. But Balaam, for an earthly reward, taught Balak how to destroy that separation. And it was done by the Midianites, among whom Balaam dwelt, who enticed Israel into adultery and idolatry ; and those Midianites were of the posterity of Abraham. Numb. xxv. 6 ; xxxi. 8, 16 ; Gen. xxv. 4. And how many children of believers are now guilty of this iniquity ! for covetousness is idolatry. Col. iii. 5. And many make a god of their belly. Phil. iii. 19. And idolatry is also adultery in the sight of God, who said of the church of Israel, Their mother hath played the harlot ; she that conceived them hath done shamefully ; for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. Hosea ii. 5. All lawful things, but they were sought in an unlawful way. So one apostle says of many teachers and professors, An heart they have exercised with covetous practices ; cursed children ; who have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness ; but was rebuked for his iniquity ; the dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet. II Peter ii. 14,

15, 16. Another says, Woe unto them; for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. Jude 11. And Christ says by a third, I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. Rev. ii. 14. Now, since covetousness and luxury are idolatry in the sight of God, and idolatry is also adultery, how many are there in the world who entice Christians into these evils, in order to grasp the honors and profits of religion to themselves! Yea, and who go out from the ways of God to gratify their love of the world! I John ii. 15, 19. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. Jude 19. Mystery Babylon is the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth. Rev. xvii. 5. And it is generally held that these things were spoken against heathen idolatry, and against the abominations of the church of Rome. But have ministers in our land come out of those abominations? For we have before proved that Dr. Stiles and Dr. Lathrop hold to a successive power of office through the church of Rome, and Dr. Hopkins does the same, notwithstanding his great difference from many about the doctrines of grace, and the power of godliness. For he says:—

A visible church may be very corrupt, and yet be a visible church of Christ, and the public administrations and acts of the officers of it, authentic and valid. And who can prove, that the pope, and his adherents, were visibly antichrist, and that the church of Rome was visibly not the church of Christ, but a false church, and was really and properly renounced and excommunicated, by the true church of Christ, before the time of the reformation from popery?<sup>1</sup>

Thus he allows that the church of Rome was a visible church of Christ, until the Protestants renounced her power, and set up national churches, who have now carried blood

<sup>1</sup>Hopkins's System, Vol. II, p. 273. [Hopkins's Works, Vol. II, p. 78.]



and slavery round the world, in galleys and gallant ships, as far as the Papists ever did. So God says of the second beast, He causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred, three-score and six. Rev. xiii. 16—18. God gave his people rest, on the seventh day, in the seventh month, and the seventh year. But the inventions of men give no rest, in hundreds, in tens, nor in units. The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest. Is. lvii. 20. Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame. Jude 13. They have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Rev. xiv. 11. But our Lord says, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. xi. 28. For we which have believed do enter into rest. Heb. iv. 3. And how clearly do these things discover the difference between all the believers in Christ, and all other men in the world! For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For they who think to purchase the gift of God with money, are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Deut. xxxii. 31—33; Acts viii. 20—23. All the governments of this world are supported by force and money, but the church of Christ is purchased with his own blood, and is governed by his word and Spirit; and believing in him, and obeying the revealed will of God by the assistance of his Spirit, is the only way of ministerial succession that he has appointed.

Our author says:—

The church is not a worldly society; and is not ruled or regulated by civil laws, or rulers of political, worldly societies; such rulers have no more authority in the church than any other members of it. The visible

church is called in Scripture, The kingdom of heaven ; the kingdom of God, and of Christ, who says, My kingdom is not of this world.<sup>1</sup>

How then can any national churches be churches of Christ? For he says, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. Mark x. 15. Except ye be converted, and become as this little child, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Matt. xviii. 3. And the Father says to the Redeemer, This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever. Is. lix. 20, 21. Which prophecy is applied to future times, when there shall be life from the dead. Rom. xi. 15, 27. But our author applies it to each believing head of a family.<sup>2</sup> And in the same place he recites part of another prophecy, which might rectify his mistake in this, even the place where God says, I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground ; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring ; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's ; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob ; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel. Is. xlv. 3—5. So when God poured out his Spirit, after the ascension of Christ, they who gladly received his word, were baptized. And again he says, Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both men and women. Acts ii. 41 ; v. 14. Circumcision was only for the males, but females are equally the subjects of baptism, which proves an essential change of the covenant. And our Lord gave the gospel commission to the eleven, who were all born again ; and he said to them, Go teach all

<sup>1</sup>Hopkins's System. Vol. II, p. 262. [Hopkins's Works, Vol. II, p. 71.]

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, pp. 336, 337. [Hopkins's Works, Vol. II, p. 122.]

nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. Matt. xxviii. 16—20. This promise is only to his children, in the way of obedience to all his commandments. And as the covenant of circumcision gave Israel a right to buy the heathen for servants, and circumcision was only for the males, the gospel says to believers, *Ye are all the children of God* by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female ; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. iii. 26—29. Abraham was an eminent type of Christ, and none are his spiritual seed but believers in Christ. How great then is the mistake of all who put themselves in the place of Abraham ! Our author was so far from believing that the Baptists sinned against the light of their consciences, as Balaam did, that he says, "There is reason to believe, that most, if not all, who believe in the baptism of children, and practice it, are more guilty and offensive to Christ, in their treatment of this institution, than the Antipædobaptists are."<sup>1</sup>

And another minister of his sentiments has given further light in this matter, in an answer to Dr. Hemmenway. He observes that the covenant of grace is always the same, under every dispensation thereof, and that a peculiar design of God's promise to Abraham was, "to keep up the visible church, and maintain a constant succession of pious men, in his family, until the appearance of the promised Messiah."<sup>2</sup> This is undoubtedly true, and a most important truth ; for God said of Abraham, I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep

<sup>1</sup>Hopkins's System, Vol. II, p. 398. [Hopkins's Works, Vol. II, p. 165.]

<sup>2</sup>Emmons against Hemmenway, 1793, p. 27.



the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. Gen. xviii. 19. *He will*, and *They shall*, was the language of God's covenant with Abraham; but *I will*, and *They shall*, is the language of the new covenant, since the death of Christ. Heb. viii. 10; x. 9. It was the will of God that the visible church should continue in the line of Abraham's posterity, until Christ came and died for his people, and then the Holy Spirit was given, and believing Jews and Gentiles were united in his church. And they never were called Christians, until believing Gentiles were received into the church without circumcision. Acts xi. 26. Yet, as our author says:—

Dr. Hemmenway has followed other writers in arguing from the former dispensations of the covenant of grace to the present, and endeavored to prove what the peculiar duties of believers are, under the present dispensation of the covenant of grace, from what they were under its former dispensations. But this mode of reasoning is by no means conclusive. It was the duty of believers under former dispensations of the covenant of grace to offer sacrifices; but can we hence infer, that it is their duty now? It was the duty of believers under former dispensations of the covenant of grace, to circumcise their children and attend the passover; but does it hence follow, that those duties are still binding? or can we justly conclude that it is the duty of believers now to circumcise their children, or even to baptize them, because it was once their duty to circumcise them? The truth is, we must learn the peculiar duties of believers under the present dispensation of the covenant of grace, from the dispensation itself, which enjoins all the peculiar duties which belong to it. . . . The Christian dispensation, which is allowed to be the freest from types and figures, plainly speaks for itself. And we ought to look into the clear dispensation of the gospel, in order to discover the peculiar duties of believers at this day.<sup>1</sup>

Yea, and how happy should we soon be, if the gospel light was followed by all, without trying to draw the vail of the law over it? As long as the death of Christ was a future event, the bloody ordinances of the law, and circumcision in particular, were given to many who did not know him; but since his death he says, All shall know me, from

<sup>1</sup>Emmons against Hemmenway, pp. 43, 44.

the least to the greatest. Heb. viii. 11. And in baptism and the holy supper, all the lawful subjects thereof openly manifest their faith in the death of Christ as a past event, and their engagement to love and live to him all their days. And if it were fully allowed that God hath disannulled the covenant of circumcision which he made with Abraham, as well as the rest of the law of typical ceremonies, and hath built his church upon a better covenant, established upon better promises, the effects would be very glorious, and silence many controversies. But the holding that the children of believers are born in the covenant of grace, or that baptism can bring them into it, without their own knowledge or choice, is such a confounding of grace and works together as holds multitudes in blindness and bondage. And this appears in the following instance.

Mr. Joseph Snow, of Providence, met with a happy change, in the glorious revival of religion in 1741; and he was soon called to preach the gospel, and a Congregational church was formed under his ministry, and he was ordained their pastor, February 12, 1747. A meeting-house was built for them, which was afterwards enlarged, and they became a numerous and honorable society,<sup>1</sup> and collected a fund of money for the support of their ministers. And as Mr. Snow was advanced in years, and a young minister arrived there from Ireland, in the spring of 1791, he was called to assist him in preaching for two years. But in that time he drew off the majority of the church and congregation from the doctrine of sovereign grace, to the way of confounding works and grace together. And as Mr. Snow tried to get him dismissed from them, a majority of the church drew up a number of accusations against Mr. Snow, and attempted to silence him from preaching. But he and his brethren called a council, who fully cleared him from those accusa-

<sup>1</sup>His Excellency, Nicholas Cooke, a member of that church, was chosen Governor of the State of Rhode Island, in 1775, and was continued in that office to 1779. He died September 14, 1782. He was a Baptist himself, though in communion with a Congregational church.

tions. And as said teacher was of the Methodist denomination, he could not have a legal right to the property of that Congregational society; therefore he changed his name to that of Congregational; and a majority of the church sent to four churches in the Massachusetts, and to two in the State of Rhode Island, for assistance in ordaining said minister in their church. Upon which Mr. Snow, and many of his brethren, sent for another council, to meet at the same time; and they advised Mr. Snow, and those who held with him, to persevere in their former faith and conduct, and to withdraw their hand of fellowship from all their brethren who had gone off from the same, and refused to return. And this advice was taken, and Mr. Snow and those who held with him, warned the other council not to ordain the young minister in their meeting-house. Yet in the face of all this, they went into said house, on October 17, 1793, and ordained him as a colleague pastor in that church. A number of that part of the church who were so resolute for the young minister, were Baptists, who had communed with others who were only sprinkled in infancy. But as they could then dispense with one plain law of Christ, so they now could with another, in the manner above described. And in the summer of 1794, Mr. Snow and his brethren were entirely shut out of their meeting-house, because they would not join with a minister whom they viewed as one who perverted the gospel of Christ. Gal. i. 7.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the ministers in the Massachusetts were for holding fast their power to the last extremity.

The first parish in Rochester settled a minister in 1768, with a promise of two hundred pounds settlement, and eighty pounds a year salary, as long as his pastoral relation to them continued. But his loose principles carried him into such evils, that a mutual council was called there in September, 1791, who judged him to be guilty of gross im-

<sup>1</sup>In 1795, a new meeting-house was built for Mr. Snow, by the help of generous persons of various denominations.



moralities ; and another council was called by the church in December following, who advised them to dismiss him, which they did, and the parish shut him out of their meeting-house. Yet he held worship with a minor part of the people elsewhere, for two years and a half, and then sued the whole parish for his salary all that time. But as he was cast at the inferior court, he appealed to the supreme judicial court, which met at Plymouth, May 20, 1794 ; and after the hearing of a whole day, the judges gave their opinion in his favor, but the jury turned the case against him. The judges allowed several Rochester men to be witnesses for said minister, but refused to admit any man from that town as a witness against him, because they said they were interested persons. So in two former cases, when the Baptists sued for their rights, noted men of their denomination were not admitted as witnesses of plain facts.<sup>1</sup> But God says, With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged ; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. Matt. vii. 2. And how is he fulfilling his word ! For taxes to support religious ministers, is taxing men where they are not represented, as no man can answer for another to God in such cases. Yet America has been full of this wickedness ; and all the blood that was shed in the American war turned upon this point. And how full is our land now of complaints against our chief rulers, because their property has been taken away by the British powers, and they must sue for it again in British courts ? Though those powers are no more interested against America, than every hireling teacher is, against all who refuse to support him. For they bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace ; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him. Micah iii. 5. And how much is this cry now heard in Europe and America ! And one of the principles of Congregational churches is, that no church act can be consum-

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 142, 163, 164.

mated without the consent of both elders and brethren.<sup>1</sup> Which is giving ministers such a power over the church, as our supreme judges have not over the jury. And said minister in Rochester was settled in the name of the king of Great Britain, and he has been supported lately by the carcass of that authority. But God says, Let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them forever. . . . This is the law of the house ; upon the top of the mountain, the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy ; behold, this is the law of the house. Ezek. xliii. 9, 12. But false men say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou. Is. lxv. 5. Teachers claim a holy power of office, above the church of God ; and in every nation, the ruling sect imagine themselves to be holier than those who have not the power of the magistrate to support their worship. Though God says to his children, This ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words ; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. Eph. v. 5—7. But how can any church avoid partaking with whoremongers, unclean persons, and covetous men who are idolaters, if they have any fellowship with worship and ministers that are supported by force ? For such men have equal votes in government with the most pious men in the land.

Our Lord and his apostles were very careful to keep the church from interfering with civil government. For when a man desired Jesus to interpose his influence in dividing of an inheritance, he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you ? And he plainly holds forth, that the leaven of hypocrisy is promoted by confounding the governments of church and state together. Luke xii. 1, 14, 15.

<sup>1</sup>Cambridge Platform, Chap. X, Sec. II. [Magnalia, Vol. II, p. 193.]

And in order to purge the old leaven from the church, Paul says, I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without, God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. I Cor. v. 7—13. Covetousness is here put before idolatry, for it is the root of all evil. I Tim. vi. 10. And it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. But blind guides strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Matt. xix. 24; xxiii. 24. And who can tell how many blind guides there are in our day? And the confounding the constitutions of the Hebrew and the Christian churches together, is the way in which they yoke Christians with the world. But God says to his church, Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. II Cor. vi. 14—18. And this call is not of a local, but of a spiritual nature. It is not from civil commerce with unbelievers, but from being yoked with them in communion in the church, which is the temple of the living God, and is to be governed wholly by his revealed will, under the influence of his Spirit. But where worldly force is used to support religious ministers, it will



be conscientiously opposed by the faithful, and villains will hide behind such opposition, and so the government both of church and state are injured. Whereas, if all were protected impartially, they who act from heavenly motives would strengthen the hands of civil rulers, and hold up light to draw others out of evil ways, and to guard against all iniquity. And it will yet be said, Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us. Is. xxxiii. 20—22. Now if we consider, that galleys and gallant ships are the greatest engines of war and slavery in all the world, and that they are upheld by national churches, how loud is the call from Heaven to come out and be separate from all such churches!

Indeed Dr. Lathrop, in order to keep up the power of ministers, which he pleads for, says:—

A Christian church is compared to a household, and to a city, in respect of the order and government, the peace and unity, that ought to be preserved in it. But if every man might assume the office of a teacher at pleasure, where would be the order and unity? There would be the same confusion and distraction, as in a State where every one claimed a right to exercise the powers of magistracy.<sup>1</sup>

But in all the States of New England, the people can leave their governors, and all their legislators out of office every year, if they please, while all the ministers, who are supported by tax and compulsion, deny the people any such liberty concerning themselves. When the people have elected their rulers, some men are appointed to give them an oath, to be faithful in their offices; and when the church

<sup>1</sup>Discourses on Matthew vii. 15, 16, pp. 10, 11.

of Christ has chosen her ministers, she has a right to call other ministers to ordain them, and to give them a solemn charge to be faithful to God and to his people. But ever since ministers have claimed a power of office above all other men in the world, the government of the churches, the cities of God, has lain waste, to the grief of all pious people. Though the time is coming when our Lord will give such comfort and strength to them who mourn in Zion, that he says, They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. Is. lxi. 1—4. This our Lord applies to the blessings of his Spirit under the gospel. Luke iv. 18, 19. Every church of Christ is a holy city, which has a right to censure and exclude all members and officers who break his laws, and refuse to manifest repentance therefor. And when they shall come to exercise this power faithfully, independently of all the powers of the world, such peace will be enjoyed as never has yet been upon earth. And the power of one sect in our land to compel all others to bow to them in religious affairs, is daily consuming, by the light and power of the gospel. One evidence of this lately appeared in Medfield. A Baptist church was constituted there in 1776; and they built them a convenient house for worship, and another for the ministry, and they have maintained regular worship among them ever since. Yet all the Baptists in Medfield were lately taxed to the Congregational minister of that town; and one of their committee was seized for that tax, and was imprisoned at Boston, July 2, 1794. But it caused such an alarm in Boston, and the news from thence which reached Medfield the next Saturday, caused such an alarm there, that two men were sent twenty miles on the Lord's day, who released the prisoner, without his paying the tax, or any costs about it. And very few now in our country will dare to make distress upon any for ministerial taxes.

If the marks of false teachers, which the above author

has published, were rightly applied, the church of Christ would soon have such deliverance from their power as she has not yet enjoyed. For he says, "Another mark of false teachers, is an implacable malignity against the standing, regular ministers of the gospel" And again he says, This sort of teachers are guided by no line, and confined to no measure; but run from place to place, enter into other men's labors and build on on other men's foundations.<sup>1</sup> Very true; and the word of Christ is daily fulfilled, who said to false teachers among the Jews, Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves. Matt. xxiii. 15. And we may see at this day, that the Jews have a fixed regard for the laws of Moses, and for the land of Canaan; but proselytes to revealed religion, who are not born again, have no fixed rule of conduct, nor any country that can set any bounds to their love of riches, honors or pleasures. Some deceitful men in the church of Corinth, accused Paul of going beyond his authority in what he had written to that church. Therefore he said, The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you; for we are come as far as to you also, in preaching the gospel of Christ: not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labors; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line, of things made ready to our hand. But he that glori-

<sup>1</sup>Discourses on Matthew, vii. 15, 16, pp. 29, 31.



eth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. II Cor. x. 4, 5, 14—18. The line and measure which he spake of was drawn by God himself, and not by any worldly powers. So the same apostle said to another church, I will not dare to speak of any of those things, which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word or deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation. Rom. xv. 18—20. And can any man believe that the words, *Measure*, *Line*, and *Foundation*, as Paul used them, can justify the use of carnal weapons in forcing all people within lines which men have drawn, to support teachers who stand upon worldly establishments? For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble: every man's work, shall be made manifest. For the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. I Cor. iii. 11—13.

And the fiery trials of the present day may afford much clearer light than our fathers enjoyed. For they banished Mr. Roger Williams, because he testified against any use of the sword in religious affairs, and against their receiving the grant of American lands from the kings of England. One of his reasons against such things, was what our Lord says of the tares of the field, which Williams held to be the world, and not the church.<sup>1</sup> But Mr. Cotton said:—

It is not the will of Christ, that [antichrist, and antichristians, and] anti-christianity should be tolerated in the world, until the end of the world. For God will put it into the hearts of faithful princes (as they have given their kingdoms to the beast, so) in fulness of time to hate the whore, and

<sup>1</sup>Williams on the Bloody Tenet, 1644, p. 44.

to leave her desolate and naked, and to burn her flesh with fire. Rev. xvii. 16, 17.<sup>1</sup>

Williams had before said :—

This hating, and desolating, and making naked, and burning, shall not arise by way of an ordinance warranted by the institution of Christ Jesus ; but by way of providence, when (as it useth to be with whores and their lovers) the church of Rome and her great lovers shall fall out ; and, by the righteous vengeance of God upon her, drunk with the blood of the saints [or holy ones,] these mighty fornicators shall turn their love into hatred, which shall make her a poor, [desolate,] naked whore, torn and consumed.<sup>2</sup>

But Cotton made no reply to this ; and how have the nations of Europe now fallen out, and have taken the riches of the national churches, to support war and vengeance against their cruel oppressors ! And is not this eating her flesh, and burning her with fire ? But the fathers of that day were so much afraid of the tyranny of European powers, that Cotton said, “ The Lord keep us from being bewitched with the whore’s cup, lest while we seem to detest and reject her with open face of profession, we do not bring her in by a back door of toleration.”<sup>3</sup> And Dr. Increase Mather quoted this passage thirty years afterwards, and then said, “ I believe that antichrist hath not at this day a more probable way to advance his kingdom of darkness, than by a toleration of all religions and persuasions.”<sup>4</sup> This was reprinted in Boston the year after their charter was taken away. But Mather and his brethren were so cruelly persecuted by the ruling powers here, that he went over to England three years after, and thanked the popish King James, for his declaration for liberty of conscience. After which he believed that our Lord meant the world, when he said, Let both grow together until the harvest.<sup>5</sup> Let all men be equally protected, and no worship be established by human

<sup>1</sup>Cotton on the Bloody Tenet Washed, 1647, pp. 42, 43.

<sup>2</sup>Williams, p. 246.

<sup>3</sup>Bloody Tenet Washed, p. 192.

<sup>4</sup>Election Sermon at Boston, May 23, 1677 ; reprinted 1685 : p. 106.

<sup>5</sup>Increase Mather’s Life, pp. 58, 110.—B.

See Vol. I, p. 419.—ED.

laws, nor ministers supported thereby, and the danger they feared is at an end. Naked popery is weak in our land. For Mr. John Thayer, who was born in Boston, went to Rome, and joined their church in May, 1783, from whence he returned through Maryland, and arrived at Boston in January, 1790; and he hath preached up the infallibility of the church of Rome, prayers for the dead, and other opinions of theirs, with very little success. But our greatest danger is from the power of the world over the church of Christ.

Dr. Increase Mather said to the churches of New England:—

If we espouse such principles as these, namely, That churches are not to inquire into the regeneration of those whom they admit unto their communion; that admission to sacraments is to be left wholly to the prudence and conscience of the minister; that explicit covenanting with God and with the church is needless; that persons not qualified for communion in special ordinances shall elect pastors of churches; that all professed Christians have a right to baptism; that brethren are to have no voice in ecclesiastical councils; that the essence of a minister's call, is not in the election of the people but in the ceremony of imposing hands; that persons may be established in the pastoral office without the approbation of neighboring churches or elders; we then give away the whole Congregational cause at once, and a great part of the Presbyterian discipline also.<sup>1</sup>

But declension prevailed for forty years longer, until the churches and the world were much alike; and then God poured out his Holy Spirit, in the most extensive manner that was ever known in America; and great numbers flocked into the churches, where ministers favored the work. Though, as a new piece of cloth when put into an old garment will make the rent worse, and new wine will burst old bottles, even so was it with old churches, in which the doings of men were blended with the perfect righteousness of Christ for justification, and the inventions of men with his laws for their government. For by the year 1744, all the ministers in New England who were supported by the laws of men, were afraid to preach in any parish where another

<sup>1</sup>Vindication of Gospel Order, 1700, p. 8.



minister was settled against his consent ; which was making ministers lords over God's heritage, to gratify their love of filthy lucre. I Peter v. 2, 3. And separations from such ministers and churches took place from that time, until many embraced believers' baptism, in and after 1749. And a great change has also taken place in many old Baptist churches. And now loud complaints are made against the Baptists, because they dare not commune in the ordinance of the Supper, with those who were only sprinkled in their infancy. But how unreasonable are these complaints ! For our apostle says, We, brethren, as Isaac was, are. the children of promise. But as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture ? Cast out the bond woman and her son ; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bond woman, but of the free. Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Gal. iv. 28—31 ; v. 1. And how can we obey this law of Christ, if we commune with any in the Holy Supper who were only sprinkled in their infancy ? And a late instance may help to shew the evil of such covenants. A man in one of the Congregational churches was convinced that he was not born again, and therefore refrained from coming to the ordinance of the Supper. And after he obtained relief in his own mind, he viewed such evils in the church, and his wife also, that they thought they could not in conscience come to communion therein, and refrained from it. The church sent a committee to labor with them, and they requested a dismissal from the church ; but instead of it, a censure was sent to them, which said, " With grief of heart we inform you, that we are greatly stumbled at your conduct, in breaking a solemn and sacred covenant with us, in which you bound yourselves in the presence of the great God, to walk in communion

with us. By thus breaking communion with us, you are guilty of the worst kind of perjury. By refusing to attend communion, or even public worship with us, you have unchristianized the whole church, and have really excommunicated us." And after trying to prove this from Scripture, and reciting the law of Christ about the power of binding and loosing, they say, "We accordingly have met in the name of Jesus, and in his name we bind you under the censure of its first admonition." This was dated November 28, 1794. The minister who sent them this censure has been a noted advocate for supporting their way by law in our country. But how great must be the bondage of any people, who must come to communion in any society where church and world are bound together, or be accused of the worst kind of perjury? However, the said man and his wife renounced those ways, and were baptized this year, and joined a Baptist church. And how great is the privilege which we enjoy, to answer a good conscience towards God, in the midst of all the confusions of the world!

Europe is full of confusion and blood; and America is become so wanton and extravagant, that it cost above a million of dollars, and required an army of fifteen thousand men last year, to compel a few counties in Pennsylvania to submit to the taxing power of our government. And the victory over them was accounted so great a favor, that a day of thanksgiving therefor was kept through all these United States, February 19, 1795. But the whole country has been full of controversy about our public affairs ever since. And are not these the shakings among the nations which God will pursue, until the Desire of all Nations shall come? Hag. ii. 7. All men desire safety and happiness; and this can only be enjoyed under the government of the Son of God, of whom it is said, In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness. I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one

from his neighbor. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord. Jer. xxiii. 6, 30—32. The precepts and promises of God are ever connected together; and no man hath any more right to any promise which Christ hath made to his ministers, who doth not love and obey him with all his heart, than thieves and robbers have to the property of honest men. John x. 1—9. And how much stealing of his words is there in our land? The Congregational scheme of church government, came as near the gospel plan, as any plan ever did which was upheld by the sword. But a zealous advocate for it lately said, “It is difficult to say what is the present ecclesiastical constitution of the Congregational churches.” And as to their faith, he says, “The body of them are Calvinists; a respectable proportion are what may be denominated Hopkinsian Calvinists; besides these, some are Arminians, some Arians, a few Socinians, and a number who have adopted Dr. Chauncy’s scheme of the final salvation of all men.”<sup>1</sup> This account is doubtless true in general, though it is questionable whether there are not more Arminians in the churches who are supported by law in this country, than there are of Calvinists. And vast pains have been taken, both in Europe and America, to persuade the people, that all the wars and tyranny that have ever taken place under the Christian name, have proceeded from the doctrines of Calvinism. For it is well known that Augustine, and other fathers of the church in the third and fourth century, held to the same doctrines which Calvin embraced in the time of the reformation from popery. But God says, Woe be to the shepherds of Israel, that feed themselves; should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye

<sup>1</sup>Morse’s Geography, 1793, first part, pp. 252, 253.



eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. . . . And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you, to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? Ezek. xxxiv. 2—18. This is an exact description of the behavior of false teachers and professors, in every age and country, where revelation hath been known. The love of self, and of earthly power and gain, with ignorance of the infinite perfections of God, and a going about to establish a righteousness of their own, hath caused all the oppressions and cruel persecutions that ever were upon earth. And men have trampled upon the precious doctrines of the gospel, and have defiled the deep waters of revelation, as wantonly and as cruelly as wanton cattle ever did, against the weak or the diseased. But if men in general were willing to be taught of God, and to obey the pure voice of his holy word, such peace and happiness would soon be enjoyed, as they will not now believe to be possible in this world.

Arians and Socinians, both deny that Jesus Christ is God by nature, and the latter hold him to be no more than a man. But there is no such faith as theirs in heaven, nor in hell, nor in heathen darkness. For all the angels of heaven worship Jesus as the Son of God. Heb. i. 6; Luke ii. 9—14. And the devils said, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? Matt. viii. 29. And the great philosophers at Athens, the greatest seat of learning in the heathen world,

got no further than to erect an altar to the unknown God, in the midst of many idols. Acts xvii. 23. So that all men who profess to worship but one God, and yet deny that Jesus Christ is truly God, have corrupted their minds more than the devils ever could do, and have carried philosophy and vain deceit beyond what the old heathens ever did. And God says, These speak evil of those things which they know not ; but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Jude 10. It is impossible to harden brute beasts against fear of danger, to the degree that many men harden themselves against the fear of God's wrath in a future world. The cause why earthly governments have no right to admit sureties in capital cases, is because the children of men cannot justly lay crimes upon any innocent person, nor raise a dead one to life, nor change the heart of a criminal. But it is as certain as any truth in the Bible, that the Son of God freely gave himself to die for our sins, and that he arose again for our justification, and that he gives the Holy Spirit to change the heart of the chief of sinners, and to guide them in the way of holiness to eternal happiness. And it is not more certain from the word of God, that the righteous will have everlasting life, than it is that all men who die in their sins will have everlasting misery in hell. And all men who hold the contrary, destroy the influence of promises and oaths, more than they do in the church of Rome, where they hold that some men will have their sins purged away after death, by the help of the prayers of the living. Therefore the Congregational churches in New England, have more pernicious errors held up among them, than there are in the church of Rome. And the apostle John says, Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God ; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of

God : and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now is it already in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them ; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. I John iv. 1—5. Worldly property is the only qualification for voters in our governments, for rulers and ministers ; and yet each parish in Connecticut, is called an ecclesiastical society in the laws by which they support their ministers. That is, they are worldly churches. And though the Massachusetts do not call each parish a church, yet they put the whole power of taxation for religious teachers into the hands of the world, without the least regard to the church of Christ in that respect. In another law, which was made in 1786, the deacons of each church are empowered to receive donations for religious purposes, which they are to manage according to the design of the donors, for the good of the church. And this opens a door for leading a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. But the compelling of any man to support any religious teacher whom he doth not choose, is a denial of the authority of Christ. For he says, As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For every tree is known by his own fruit ; for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good ; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil ; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. And why call ye my Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say ? Luke vi. 31, 44—46. How do all men practically deny Jesus Christ to be Lord, who refuse to believe and obey him ? For unto the pure all things are pure ; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure ; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being



abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. Titus i. 15, 16. And all men allow that actions speak louder than words, and also that injuries from professed friends, are more grievous than from open enemies. How full then is the world of the iniquity of denying that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh? And this is according to the prophesy which says, There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude 4. All men who indulge themselves in sin because God is infinitely gracious, are more or less guilty of these evils. And though the national church of Israel was constituted by God himself, yet all orders among them became so corrupt that he said, The best of them is a brier, the most upright is sharper than a thorn-hedge. Micah vii. 4. And if it was so with a church which God formed, how much more destructive are churches that are formed by the laws of men, enforced by the sword? How do all men practically deny Jesus Christ to be Lord, who refuse to obey his laws for the government of his church? But how have the churches increased in our land, who hold him to be their only lawgiver?

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### A LIST OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE FIVE STATES OF NEW ENGLAND, FOR THE YEAR 1795.

The first column contains the year in which the church was constituted, as far as it is known ; the second the name of the town ; the third its distance from Boston ; the fourth, the name of their minister, if they have any ; the fifth the number of members in each church where it could be obtained.

#### MASSACHUSETTS.—COUNTY OF SUFFOLK.

Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1665	Boston,		Samuel Stillman, D. D.,	267
1743			Thomas Baldwin, A. M.,	158

#### COUNTY OF NORFOLK.

1750	Bellingham,	34	Noah Alden,	51
1769	Wrentham,	30	William Williams, A. M.,	40
1776	Medfield,	20	<i>Edward Clarke</i> , <sup>1</sup>	42
1780	Randolph,	16	Joel Briggs, A. M.,	58

#### COUNTY OF PLYMOUTH.

1756	Middleborough,	33	Isaac Backus,	91
1757		42	Ebenezer Hinds,	29
1761		43	Samuel Nelson,	107
1785	Bridgewater,	25	George Robinson,	53
1788	Marshfield,	33		26
1791	Carver,	50	John Tripp,	52

<sup>1</sup>Those in *Italics* are not ordained ministers.

## COUNTY OF BRISTOL.

Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1663	Swanzy,	52	Charles Thompson, A. M.,	150
1693		55	Russel Mason,	346
1753	Rehoboth,	51	Thomas Seamans,	45
1762		48	John Hicks,	40
1772		48	Jacob Hicks,	130
1777		40	Jeremiah Irons,	56
1780		45		15
1789		42	Aaron Wheeler,	36
1794		44	John Peirce Jones,	31
1761	Taunton,	37	Ebenezer Nelson,	55
1769	Attleborough,	32	<i>Laban Thurber,</i>	68
1781		38	Elisha Carpenter,	49
1772	Dighton,	50	Enoch Goff,	250
1774	Freetown,	48	John Lawrence,	20
1781		50	Philip Hathaway,	50
1774	New Bedford,	53	<i>Zaccheus Tobey,</i>	18
1781	Dartmouth,	58	Daniel Hicks,	347
1780	Raynham,	37		14

## COUNTY OF BARNSTABLE.

1757	Harwich,	84	Abner Lewis,	72
1771	Barnstable,	74	Enoch Eldridge,	58

## DUKES COUNTY.

1693	Chilmark,	99		16
1780	Tisbury,	97	David Leonard, A. B.,	45

## COUNTY OF ESSEX.

1765	Haverhill,	33	Hezekiah Smith, A. M.,	176
	Amesbury,	50	Moses Chace.	
1785	Rowley,	26		50
1793	Danvers,	18	Thomas Green,	30

## COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX.

1771	Chelmsford,	25	John Peckens,	95
1780	Newton,	9	Joseph Grafton,	94
1781	Cambridge, }	7	Shubael Lovell,	84
	Woburn, }	10		
1789	Weston,	14		18

## COUNTY OF WORCESTER.

1738	Leicester,	58	Nathan Dana,	45
1749	Sturbridge,	65	<i>Zenas L. Leonard, A. B.,</i>	96



Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1762	Charlton,	60	David Rathbun,	113
1765	Sutton,	47	<i>Samuel Waters,</i>	52
1786		46		37
1792		41	William Batcheller,	57
1768	Hardwick,	70		40
1770	Royalstone,	80	Moses Kenney,	155
1776	Harvard,	35	Isaiah Parker,	129
1779	Ashburnham,	60		57
1780	Northbridge,	40	John Cooper,	47
1782	Templeton,	60		97
1791	Upton,	45	Simeon Snow.	

## COUNTY OF HAMPSHIRE.

1736	South Brimfield,	80	Elijah Coddington,	155
1789	West Springfield,	100	Jesse Wightman, <sup>1</sup>	30
			Edward Upham, A. M.	
1761	Ashfield,	117	Ebenezer Smith,	26
1788		117	Enos Smith,	92
1765	Leverett,	95		59
1768	Wilbraham,	83	Seth Clark,	228
1793		85		34
1772	New Salem,	85	Josiah Orcott,	45
1780	Shutesbury,	88	Joseph Smellage,	57
1780	Leyden,	112	Joseph Greene,	64
1780	Chesterfield,	106	Ebenezer Vining,	45
1780	Coleraine,	116		52
1789		116	Edmund Littlefield,	19
1784	Westfield,	105		85
1785	Russell,	111	Ebenezer Stow,	45
1786	Shelburne,	112	David Long.	
1788	Conway,	110		82
1789	Whateley,	107	Asa Todd,	45
1789	Buckland,	120		26
1789	Bernardstown,	112	Levi Hodge,	50
1789	Granville,	120		28
1790	Charlemont,	123		31
1793	Monson,	80	Samuel Webster.	
1795	Belchertown,	85	Samuel Bigelow,	18
1795	Granby,	85	<i>Silas Palk,</i>	15

## COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE.

1769	Cheshire,	140	Peter Worden,	155
1771		142		35

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Wightman is the present pastor of this church.

Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1791		144	John Leland,	173
1772	Pittsfield,	140	Valentine Rathbun,	31
1772	Hancock,	150	Clark Rogers,	54
1777	Washington,	135	John Nichols,	68
1779	Sandisfield,	126		88
1788			Benjamin Baldwin,	60
1788	Bullocksgrant,	135	Nathan Haskins,	55
1789	Great Barrington,	140	Jeduthan Grey,	76
1790	Stockbridge and West Stockbridge,	150	Samuel Whelpley, A. M.	86
1791	Middlefield,			20
1794	Williamstown,	135		16

## COUNTY OF YORK.

1768	Berwick,	86	William Hooper,	93
1772	Sanford,	98		34
1780	Wells,	88	Nathaniel Lord,	63
1781	Shapleigh,	108	Tozer Lord,	40
1785			Nehemiah Davis,	55
1782	Coxhall,	108	Simon Lock,	57
1795	Limerick,		Levi Chadbourn,	50
1782	Parsonsfield,		Samuel Weeks,	13
1791	Waterborough,	110	Pelatiah Tingley, A. M.,	30
1791		110	Henry Smith,	28
1791	Fryeburg,	160	Zebadiah Richardson,	25
1792	Cornish,			47

## COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND.

1768	Gorham,	130	James M'Corson,	28
1785	Harpsswell,	162	Samuel Woodward,	53
1791	Hebron,	162	<i>Samuel Flagg,</i>	39
1791	Buckfield,	165		32
1791	Paris,	170	James Hooper,	34
1793	Livermore,		<i>Elisha Williams, A. M.</i>	60
1782	New Gloucester,	146		10
1794			Nathan Merrill,	16
1794	Raymondstown,		Zechariah Leach,	40

## COUNTY OF LINCOLN.

1784	Bowdoinham,	172	Job Macomber,	40
1784	Thomaston,	215	Elisha Snow,	90
1784	Edgecomb,		Daniel Hebbard,	100
1788	Bowdoin,	166	James Potter,	37

Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1791			William Stinson,	54
1794				24
1788	Vassalborough,	203	Nehemiah Gould,	39
1789	Ballston,	195	Joshua Young,	23
1791	Sidney,		Asa Wilbur,	53
1791	Cushing,	216	Ephraim Hall,	49
1792	Sterling,		Eliphalet Smith,	51
1792	Readfield,	190	Isaac Case,	80
1792	Lewiston,			58
1793	Muscongus,	205	Andrew Fuller,	31
1793	Greene,			51
1793	Nobleborough,	192		15
1794	North Sandwich,		Lemuel Jackson,	18
1795	Clinton,		Mephibosheth Cain,	30
1795	Barrettstown,			18
1794	North Vineyard,			20
1790	Sandy River,		Edward Lock,	100

## COUNTY OF HANCOCK.

1791	Islesborough,	260	Thomas Eames,	30
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				8,463

Churches, 136 ; ministers, 105.

## RHODE ISLAND.—COUNTY OF PROVIDENCE.

1639	Providence,	45	Stephen Gano,	210
1706	Smithfield,	55	John Winsor,	150
1625	Scituate,	56		62
1766			John Westcoat.	
1732	Cumberland,	34	Abner Ballou,	48
1762		36		36
1649	Gloster,	60	Joseph Winsor.	
1778			William Bowen,	58
1790			Stephen Place,	60
1771	Johnston,	48	Samuel Winsor,	50
1766	Foster,	63	John Williams,	107
1789			John Hammond,	91
1765	North Providence,	48	Rufus Tefft,	170

## COUNTY OF NEWPORT.

1644	Newport,	72	Michael Eddy,	90
1656			Gardner Thurston,	225
1671			William Bliss,	54
1788			Caleb Greene,	30



Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1685	Tiverton,	70	Peleg Burroughs,	122
1781		62	James Boomer,	24
1772	New Shoreham,	85	Thomas Dodge,	45

## COUNTY OF BRISTOL.

1764	Warren,	53	Luther Baker,	52
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## COUNTY OF WASHINGTON.

1708	Hopkinton,	90	John Burdick, Asa Coon.	462
1770			John Gardner,	52
1710	North Kingstown,	67	Nathan Hill,	70
1767		66	Philip Jenkins,	77
1788		70	William Northup,	127
1750	Exeter,	70	John Tillinghast,	249
1750	Westerly,	95		123
1770				301
1778	South Kingstown,	75	Benjamin Weight,	36
1794				51
1772	Richmond,	75	Henry Joslin,	116
1774			Benjamin Barber,	66
1774				37

## COUNTY OF KENT.

1725	Warwick,	58	Samuel Littlefield,	40
1791		54		35
1743	East Greenwich,	60	Thomas Manchester,	50
1752	Coventry,	58	Thomas Manchester,	124
1774		66	John Benson,	100
1780	West Greenwich,	67	Elisha Greene,	50

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 3,850

Churches, 40 ; ministers, 34.

## CONNECTICUT.—COUNTY OF NEW LONDON.

1705	Groton,	113	Timothy Wightman,	182
1765		117	Silas Burris,	81
1743	Stonington,	100	Peleg Randal,	145
1765		104	Simeon Brown,	194
1775		110	Valentine W. Rathbun,	46
1793			Samuel Northup,	46
1767	New London,	115	Zadoc Darrow,	268
1786		118	Davis Rogers,	24

Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1743	Colchester,	105	Abel Palmer,	90
1784		100	Christopher Palmer,	58
1752	Lyme,	120	Jason Lee,	264
1786	Montville,	110	Reuben Palmer,	52
1786	Preston,	85		60

## COUNTY OF WINDHAM.

1750	Thompson,	57	John Martin,	100
1766	Woodstock,	66		73
1792		68	Amos Wells,	76
1774	Ashford,	74	Dyer Stark,	90
1776		72	John Rathbun,	54
1792		69		38
1794		67	Daniel Bolton.	
1776	Killingly,	65		
1776	Hampton,	70	Peter Rogers,	63
1792	Plainfield,	72	Nathaniel Cole,	87

## COUNTY OF HARTFORD.

1739	Farmington,	127	Calvin Hulbert,	40
1775	Suffield,	107	John Hastings,	103
1780	Bristol,	115		70
1786	Wintonbury,	112	Ashbel Gillet,	50
1789	Hartford,	106		50
	Windsor,	110		
1789	East Hartford,	101	Stephen Shepard,	47
1790	Somers,	104	Seth Parsons,	20
1792	Enfield,	100	Christopher Minor,	15
1793	Symsbury,			7

## COUNTY OF NEW HAVEN.

1787	Wallingford,	130		33
1792				29

## COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD.

1751	Stratfield,	166	Stephen Royce,	119
1773	Stamford,	194	Ebenezer Ferris,	25
1773	Greenwich,	204	Nathaniel Finch,	45
1785	Danbury,		Elijah Wheeler,	40
1790				48
1789	Ridgefield,		Elias Lee,	27
1794	Newtown,		John Sherman,	21

## COUNTY OF LITCHFIELD.

Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1786	Warren,			30
1788	Torrington,			50
1789	Canaan,			27
1789	Litchfield,		Amos Tuttle,	23
1790	New Hartford,		Epaphras Thompson,	75
1790	Roxbury,			31
1791	Watertown,		Daniel Wildman,	25
1791	New Milford,			38
1793	Colebrook,		Rufus Babcock,	31
1793	Sharon,			44

## COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX.

1760	Saybrook,	136	Eliphalet Lester,	30
1788			William Hill,	
1778	Chatham,	127	Solomon Wheat,	63
1783				72
1790	East Haddam,	118	Simeon Dickinson,	47

## COUNTY OF TOLLAND.

1780	Willington,	81	David Lillebridge,	48
1780	Coventry,	92		10
1786	Stafford,	87		24

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 3,547

Churches, 60 ; ministers, 40.

## STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.—COUNTY OF ROCKINGHAM.

1771	Brentwood,	53	Samuel Shepard,	456
1780	Northwood,		Edward Pilsbury,	104
1780	Salem,	46		57
1796	Newton,	40	John Peak.	

## COUNTY OF STRATFORD.

1772	Gilmanton,		Walter Powers,	67
1780	Meredith,		Nicholas Folsom,	64
1780	Sanbornton,		John Crocket,	61
1793	Sandwich,		Jacob Jewel,	112

## COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH.

1782	Sutton,		Samuel Ambrose,	87
1782	Temple,			43
1783	Weare,		Amos Wood, A. B.,	40
1786	Mason,		William Elliot,	36



Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1787	Hopkinton,		Elisha Andrews,	75
1787	Amherst,			30
1788	New London,		Job Seamans,	118
1791	Hollis,			31
1793	Salisbury,		Elias Smith,	134

## COUNTY OF CHESHIRE.

1770	Richmond,		Isaac Kenney,	145
1771	Westmoreland,		Ebenezer Bailey,	39
1791			<i>Nathaniel Willbore,</i>	18
1777	Marlow,		Eleazer Beckwith,	131
1778	Newport,		Biel Ledoyt,	89
1781	Wendal,		Nehemiah Woodward,	25
1785	Dublin,		Elijah Willard,	33
1787	Cornish,		Jedidiah Hebbard,	28
1790	Fitzwilliam,			
1791	Alstead,		Jeremiah Higbie,	54
1792	Swansea,			18
1792	Hanover,	130	Abel Bridgman.	
1792	Plainfield,	126	Jonathan Cram,	36

## COUNTY OF GRAFTON.

1780	New Holderness,		Jeremiah Ward,	32
1780	Rumney,		Cotton Hains,	78
1783	Canaan,	120	<i>Uriah Smith,</i>	34
1785	Grafton,	110		16
1788	Landaff,		Isaiah Stone,	101
1790	Dartmouth,		Daniel Brainard,	20
1792	Cockermouth,			32
1793	Dorchester,			50
1793	Wentworth,		Samuel Currier,	38
1794	Lyme,	135		15
1794	Alexandria,			15

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 2,562

Churches, 41 ; ministers, 30.

STATE OF VERMONT.<sup>1</sup>—COUNTY OF BENNINGTON.

1768	Shaftsbury,			24
				30
1780				30

<sup>1</sup>The distances of the towns in Vermont from Boston, are so little known that they are omitted.

Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers.	No.
1788			Caleb Blood,	160
1773	Pownal,		Caleb Nichols,	165
1781	Manchester,		Joseph Cornel,	39
1784	Halifax,		Abner Bemis,	14
1791	Somerset,			27

## COUNTY OF ADDISON.

1786	Leicester,			
1787	Orwell,			108
1788	Brandon,		Calvin Chamberlain,	65
1793	Georgia,			20
1794	Shoreham,			30

## COUNTY OF RUTLAND.

1780	Wallingford,		Henry Green,	88
1782	Middletown,		Silvanus Hains,	43
1782	Ira,			49
1783	Pittsford,		Elisha Rich,	45
1684	Clarendon,		Isaac Beals,	46
1785	Pultney,			
1787	Hubbardston,			23
1790	Pawlet,			24

## COUNTY OF WINDHAM.

1780	Guilford,			102
1782			Peleg Hicks,	
1791			Whitman Jacobs,	53
1782	Westminster,			32
1783	Dummerston,		Rufus Freeman,	171
1783	Athens,			25
1786	Putney,			63
1789	Rockingham,			40
1790	Jamaica,			26
1792	Wardsboro',		Simeon Coombs,	29

## COUNTY OF CHITTENDEN.

1793	Fairfax,		Roswell Meers,	22
1793	Cambridge,		Joseph Call.	
1794	Alburgh,			13
1793	Monkton,			20
1794	Bolton,			15
1794	Richmond,			25

## COUNTY OF WINDSOR.

Year.	Town.	Miles.	Ministers,	No.
1780	Woodstock,		Elisha Ransom,	144
1782	Bridgewater,			101
1784	Windsor,		Roswel Smith,	57
1784	Royalton,		John Hebbard,	51
1788	Reading,			31
1789	Chester,		Aaron Leland,	67
1789	Hartford,		John Drew,	45
1789	Thetford,			13
1789	Sharon,			16
1792	Norwich,		Robert Low,	43
1794	Hartland,			30

## COUNTY OF ORANGE.

1783	Corinth,		Thomas West,	88
1788	Danville,		Isaac Roots,	28

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 2,480

Churches, 48 ; ministers, 23.

The whole number of Baptist churches, ministers and members, in these States, is as follows:—

	Churches.	Ministers.	Members.
Massachusetts,	136	105	8,463
Rhode Island,	40	34	3,850
Connecticut,	60	40	3,547
New Hampshire,	41	30	2,562
Vermont,	48	23	2,480
In all New England,	325	232	20,902
New York,	84	111	5,263
New Jersey,	30	30	2,177
Pennsylvania,	31	35	1,368
Delaware,	8	10	390
Maryland,	17		920
Virginia,	227	272	22,793
Kentucky,	57	67	3,483
North Carolina,	112	172	8,017
South Carolina,	76	98	4,554
Georgia,	61	79	3,227
North West Territory,	18	25	1,336
	<hr/> 1,152	<hr/> 1,125	<hr/> 73,767



The account of the churches, ministers and members south of New England is taken from Asplund's Register for 1794, as some are in New England; though the most of these are from later accounts. He has numbered all licensed preachers, but I reckon only those who are ordained.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

A CONCISE VIEW OF THE SECTS IN AMERICA, AND OF THEIR DIFFERENT ASSOCIATIONS.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IS NOT THE CAUSE OF SECTS AND PARTIES AMONG CHRISTIANS.—A VIEW OF OUR SOUTHERN STATES.—EACH CHURCH OF CHRIST SHOULD ACT AS ONE UNITED BODY.—AN ACCOUNT OF THE WARREN ASSOCIATION.—AND OF THOSE OF STONINGTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE, SHAFTSBURY, WOODSTOCK, BOWDOINHAM, VERMONT, MEREDITH, DANBURY AND LEYDEN.—THE NATURE OF THESE ASSOCIATIONS DESCRIBED.—AND OF THREE OTHERS ; WITH GENERAL OBSERVATIONS UPON THE UNIVERSAL RULE OF EQUITY.

What shall we think of the prophecy in the beginning of this volume ?<sup>1</sup> For it says :—

Through the liberty enjoyed here, all religious sects will grow up into large and respectable bodies. But the Congregational and Presbyterian denomination, however hitherto despised, will, by the blessing of Heaven, continue to hold the greatest figure in America ; and, notwithstanding all the fruitless labors and exertions to proselyte us to other communions, become more numerous than the whole collective body of our fellow Protestants in Europe. The whole proselytism of New England in particular, for sixty or seventy years past, has not exceeded eight or ten thousand, while our augment in that term, by natural increase, has been half a million.

In the first place there was a great mistake, in supposing that religious liberty would favor the growth of religious sects. For cruel oppression was the cause of the increase of sects in England, as it was the flight of our fathers into America. And

<sup>1</sup>Vol. III, old edition. See p. 312.—ED.

the hanging of four Quakers in Boston, greatly promoted their sect in this country; and the light and liberty which has been enjoyed in latter years has been far from increasing their number. The sect which John Rogers began at New London in 1677, owed its increase to the severity of Connecticut government against them; and since that has ceased, their society has nearly dissolved.<sup>1</sup> And although the Sandemanians made a great noise in New England, from 1764 to 1775, yet, having no oppression to complain of, they have hardly a name now left amongst us. The followers of Jemima Wilkinson, also, who made their appearance, October, 1776, and continued for some years after, are now all gone from among us. And though the Shakers were a large body when the above prophecy was published, yet we seldom hear of them now, unless it be by way of observing that the power which then actuated them is gone; and their attention is much fixed upon worldly schemes of gain. Episcopalians received vast sums of money from England to support their ministers, from 1701 to 1775, and those who turned to them were exempted from taxes to Congregational ministers; and as oppression was greater in Connecticut, than in other governments in New England, they increased the most there; but since the independence of America, they do not increase in most parts of the country; and in the whole of the old colony of Plymouth they have but one minister, and he has but a few hearers. And if the Congregational and Presbyterian ministers in the Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Vermont, had not the sword of the magistrate to support them, no one can tell how small their number would soon be.

And as the above prophecy refers to all America, we are called to look into our southern States. After our independence was established, the Presbyterians in those parts entered upon measures to unite all their societies under one head; to promote which, a book was published in North

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 10—13, Vol. I, pp. 337, 388.



Carolina in 1788, wherein the author says, "I have often thought, that the popular Congregational government of the Independents, joined to the Presbyterial judicatures, as a final resort, would form the most perfect model of church government that the state of things on earth will admit of." But this model has been tried in Connecticut, with the sword of the magistrate to help it, ever since 1708, and how far is it now from perfection? In the same page, the author says of the Baptists in those parts:—

Considering that they have no written standard of orthodoxy, and that their preachers are men without a liberal education, I have often sat with wonder and pleasure to hear them so sound in doctrine as they really are. In church government, the Baptists have adopted the independent plan; the inconvenience of which they often experience, as it provides no final and decisive judge of controversy, nor tribunal to pronounce on heresy or false doctrine. But the distinguishing characteristic of the Baptist profession is their excluding infant and practicing only adult baptism, and making it their great term of communion, excluding all other Christians from the Lord's table among them, and not suffering their members to communicate with other churches. How they can acknowledge any other people to be a church of Christ, and yet continue this bar of separation, is not to be accounted for.<sup>1</sup>

But if the Holy Scriptures are not a perfect standard of orthodoxy, and if each particular church of Christ has not power from him to receive all members and officers who are described therein, and also to exclude all officers and members who break his laws and refuse to manifest repentance therefor, we know not where to go for any rule of faith and conduct; nor for power to govern us in religious affairs. And as to his last difficulty, it may be observed, that circumcision was as necessary in a member of the church of Israel, as baptism can be in the church of Christ; yet Moses, that eminent servant of God, did not circumcise his children while he was in Midian; but when he was going to lead Israel out of their bondage in Egypt, he was constrained to have them circumcised, even at the peril of his own life.

<sup>1</sup>Pattillo's Sermons, pp. 48, 49.

Exod. iv. 24, 25. And the nation of Israel were the church of God in the wilderness, and yet they did not circumcise their children for forty years; though they were not suffered to neglect it in the promised land. Joshua v. 2—5. And the church of Christ has been in Egyptian bondage, and in a great and terrible wilderness, ever since the beast arose out of the bottomless pit. Rev. xi. 2, 8; xii. 14; xiii. 5. The cause why many Christians were for continuing circumcision, after it was out of date, was the fear of persecution for the cross of Christ. But Paul said, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. Gal. vi. 12—15. But infant baptism binds the church and world together, instead of crucifying any one to the world, and the world to him. Yet our author says of the Baptists, “They made their appearance in Germany soon after the reformation began. But the present race of Baptists are happily very unlike the furious and bloodthirsty bigots who wore the name at that time.”<sup>1</sup> As if Christ and his disciples had not been Baptists near fifteen hundred years before the reformation in Germany. And has any man ever been able to produce a mention of infant baptism before the third century? And in the next century, Constantine brought the sword into the church to punish heretics, and to support religious ministers; and blood and slavery, deceit and cruelty, have followed those superstitions ever since, though many good men have been ensnared in those ways. In the year 1789, many Presbyterians met at Philadelphia, and formed a tribunal which they called, “The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America.” And they opened a correspondence with the General Association in Connecticut; and a delegate from thence to the Presbyterian Assembly at Philadelphia in May, 1793, said in a letter to England the fall after,

<sup>1</sup>Pattillo's Sermons, p. 47.

“There are nearly as many ministers of our order in Connecticut, as there are Presbyterians in all the States to the southward of Connecticut.”<sup>1</sup> That is, in ten States, in which are nearly three millions of people, they have but about two hundred Presbyterian ministers. How far then is the Congregational and Presbyterian denomination in America from rising above all other Protestants, both here and in Europe.

And if we search the Scriptures, we shall find, that a being born again by the power of the Spirit of God, and a receiving special gifts from him for the ministry, is the only way that he has revealed, for any to come into the church, and into the work of preaching the gospel as they ought, let their education be what it may. Hence the first apostle says, As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ. . . . The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder; yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. I Pet. iv. 10, 11; v. 1—5. Lordship is of the Gentiles, and they tread the holy city under foot forty and two months, or for a time, and times, and half a time, while the church is in the wilderness. Mark x. 42; Rev. xi. 2; xii. 14. Men trample upon the holy gov-

<sup>1</sup>Rippon's Register, Vol. II, p. 131.



ernment, which Christ hath appointed in his church, as long as the power of the beast continues. And they say, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? . . . . They that dwell on the earth shall wonder (whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. Rev. xiii. 4; xvii. 8. Deceit and cruelty under a mask of religion and government, have changed into all shapes that can be conceived of; and Who hath been like the present scheme? or Who is able to war with the governing powers? are the great reasons for complying with the established worship, or at least for not boldly appearing to renounce all the laws and inventions of men in the worship of God, and in the government of his church.

The Congregational ministers in the Massachusetts meet in associations when they please, without any act of their churches; and they act many things in private, and claim the whole power of licensing candidates for the ministry; and in Connecticut they also advise the calling a consociation in each county, when they think proper, to revoke acts of particular churches, or to censure such ministers or churches as they judge to be guilty. They likewise choose delegates in each county, to meet once a year in a general association of ministers by themselves, from all parts of that State. But the Baptists had suffered so much from these measures, that they could not be persuaded to meet in associations for many years, though upon quite a different plan. Yet in September, 1766, a number of elders and brethren agreed to send an invitation to their churches, to appoint a meeting the next year, to confer upon these things. And on September 8, 1767, ten churches met by delegation at Warren, with three ministers from the Philadelphia Association, and a letter from thence on the subject. Most of those who met, thought they were not prepared to proceed then, but four churches were ready, and they formed an association, and named it from the town where they met;

namely, the churches of Warren, Haverhill, Bellingham, and the Second in Middleborough.<sup>1</sup> And as the annual Commencement at our college is on the first Wednesday in September, and some who come to it from a distance would desire to attend the Association also, it was appointed to be on the Tuesday after the Commencement. They accordingly met at Warren, September 13, 1768, when four churches joined this Association, as four more did at Warren, September 12, 1769. Their next meeting was at Bellingham, September 11, 1770, and they met again at Sutton, September 10, 1771, when they had increased to twenty churches, and eight hundred and thirty-seven members; and they then began to print minutes of their proceedings, which they have done ever since. And the churches in the foregoing list who are now in the Warren Association, are the two in Boston, those in Bellingham, Haverhill, Warren, Middleborough,

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 154, 155.

Mr. Backus's Diary contains the following account of this meeting:—

“Tuesday, September 8, [1767.] We went to Warren, where a general conference was appointed; and it was opened in the afternoon by a sermon from Acts 15. 9, by Mr. Gano, after which the following elders and brethren met in conference, viz. :—Of Warren, Elder James Manning, and brethren Benjamin Cole and Daniel Brown; Rehoboth, Elder Richard Round, brethren Samuel Bullock and Daniel Bullock; Haverhill, Elder Hezekiah Smith, brethren Jacob Whittier and Jonathan Shepherd; Norton, William Carpenter; Bellingham, Elder Noah Alden; Middleborough, Elder Ebenezer Hinds, Elder Isaac Backus; Cumberland, Elder Daniel Miller; Boston, Deacon Joseph Collins, brother Philip Freeman; Attleborough, brethren Abraham Bloss and Joseph Guild. Elder Abel Griffith, of Pennsylvania, and Elder Noah Hammond, of Long Island, were also present. Elder Gano was chosen Moderator, and Elder Backus, Clerk. The design of this meeting was to inquire into the state of the churches, and to see if they would come into the method of annual associations as they do in the western churches; and the elders and brethren from four churches now came into such an agreement, namely, those of Warren, Haverhill, Bellingham, and Elder Hinds, of Middleborough; but I did not see my way clear to join now, if ever I do.”

Mr. Backus's church joined the Association in 1770. “They waited until they could be satisfied that this Association did not assume any jurisdiction over the churches, before they joined. And they now joined upon the express condition that no complaint should ever be received by the Association against any particular church that was not of the Association, nor from any censured member of any of our churches.” Backus's Manuscripts. See *Life and Times of Backus*, pp. 155, 156; also Manning and Brown University, pp. 72—82, where may be found the above-mentioned letter from the Philadelphia Association, and the “Sentiments and Plan of the Warren Association,” drawn up by President Manning.—ED.

Charlton, Royalstone, Wrentham, South Brimfield, the First in Attleborough, Wilbraham, Woodstock, and Freetown, those in Chelmsford, Harwich, Barnstable, New Salem, Leicester, Medfield, Harvard, Newton, Salem in New Hampshire. Cambridge, Northbridge, Providence, Gloucester, Sturbridge, Ashburnham, Templeton, Rowley, Weston, Bridgewater, Randolph, Marshfield, Carver, Hollis, Hardwick, and Belchertown; extending over all the old colonies of Plymouth and the Massachusetts, excepting what is west of Connecticut River, and into three adjoining States. This Association has begun to collect a fund for the purpose of assisting pious young men in obtaining human learning, with a view to the gospel ministry. Thirteen men were chosen by this Association, and were incorporated by the Legislature of the Massachusetts in February, 1794, to manage a fund for this purpose. This Association is to fill up vacancies, when any happen, as long as the Association continues; and if it should ever be dissolved, the corporation are then to elect their own members, in perpetual succession. They are invested with all necessary powers for receiving estates, real or personal, until the income thereof shall amount to a thousand pounds; and to use and improve the income of the fund for the assistance of such young persons in their education for the Baptist ministry, as the majority of the Trustees shall determine to be subjects thereof. A small fund for this purpose is already collected, and all their generous friends are solicited to increase it, to promote such a useful institution.

The benefits of the Warren Association soon became so evident, that others were formed in many parts of the country. The Stonington Association began in 1772, which now includes three Baptist churches in Stonington, the first in Groton, New London, and Saybrook, those in Colchester, Montville, Chatham, East Haddam, second and third in Ashford, the second in Woodstock, those of Hampton, Plainfield, Exeter, West Greenwich, and two in Richmond, in the



States of Connecticut and Rhode Island. Their annual meeting is on the third Tuesday of October. The New Hampshire Association began in 1776, and now includes the Baptist churches of Brentwood, Northwood, Gilmantown, Salisbury, Madbury, Berwick, Sanford, Wells, Coxall, one in Shapleigh, and Waterborough, Cornish, and Fryeburg, extending across the east part of New Hampshire, and over the county of York in the Massachusetts. Their annual meeting is on the second Wednesday in June. The Shaftsbury Association began in 1781, in which are now three churches in Shaftsbury, two in Cheshire, those of Pownal, Pittsfield, Chesterfield, Hancock, Bullocksgrant, Stockbridge, Washington, first in Sandisfield and Great Barrington, with Williamstown, in Vermont and the Massachusetts, and twenty-five churches in the State of New York. Their yearly meeting is on the first Wednesday in June. The Woodstock Association began in 1783, in which are now the churches of Woodstock, Canaan, Bridgewater, Windsor, Hartford, Royalton, Sharon, Thetford, Norwich, Cambridge, Alburgh, Chester, Rockingham, Westminster, Wardsburgh, Westmoreland, Marlow, Mason, Temple, Dublin, Newport, Alstead, Cornish, Wendal, Plainfield, Sutton, New London, Hopkinton and Grafton, in New Hampshire and Vermont, and one in Canada. Another connection of churches was formed in those parts in 1795, called The Richmond Convention, of which I have not obtained a particular account. The annual meeting of the Woodstock Association is on the last Wednesday of September. The Bowdoinham Association began in 1787, and it now contains the Baptist churches of Bowdoinham, Harpswell, Bowdoin, Hebron, Buckfield, Paris, Thomaston, Vassalborough, Ballston, Sidney, Readfield, Sterling, Muscongus, Cushing, Lewiston, Nobleborough, Greene and New Sandwich, in the counties of Cumberland and Lincoln, in the District of Maine. Their annual meeting is on the third Wednesday in August. The Vermont Association began also in 1787, and it contains the

churches of Clarendon, Manchester, Middletown, Hubbards-ton, Ira, Wallingford, Orwell, Pittsford, Brandon, Pawlet, Shoreham and Georgia, in Vermont, with three in the State of New York. Their annual meeting is on the first Wednesday of October. The Meredith Association began in 1789, and it includes the churches of Meredith, Sandwich, Holderness, Rumney, Landaff and Bradford, Dartmouth, Wentworth, Cockermouth, Sanbornton, Corinth and Ver-shire, and Danville, in New Hampshire and Vermont. Their annual meeting is on the second Wednesday in September. The Danbury Association began in 1790, and it includes the churches of Danbury, Suffield, Westfield, Canaan, Walling-ford, Farmington, Roxbury, Warren, Watertown, New Hart-ford, New Milford, Sharon, one in Sandisfield, Colebrook, East Hartford, Newtown, Litchfield, Stratfield, and three in the State of New York. It extends from the south borders of the Massachusetts west of the great river across Con-necticut to the sea. The churches of Ridgefield, Stamford and Greenwich, belong to Warwick Association in the State of New York. The annual meeting of the Danbury Asso-ciation is on the third Wednesday of September. The Ley-den Association began in 1793, in which are the churches of Leyden, Bernardston, Richmond, Leverett, two in Guilford, Coleraine, Putney, Somerset, Dummerston, Halifax, Buck-land and Ashfield, on the north side of the Massachusetts, and on the corners of Vermont and New Hampshire. Their annual meeting is on the second Wednesday of October. As I failed of obtaining the last minutes of the Vermont, Meredith, and Leyden Associations, their numbers stand as they were in 1794, the others as they were in 1795. If any mistakes are discovered, and any man will point them out, the author would account it a favor, and take the best way he can to correct them.

These associations refuse to hear and judge of any per-sonal controversy in any church, or to intermeddle with the affairs of any church which has not joined with them.

When any church would join any association, they send a letter and messengers thereto, informing when their church was constituted, the faith and order of it, and their number of members. If satisfaction is obtained, they are received by a vote of the association, and the moderator gives the messengers the right hand of fellowship. And each church sends a letter and messengers, or a letter at least, to the association every year, to give an account of the state of the church, and how many have been added, dismissed, have died, or have been excluded in the year past. If these things are neglected for a number of years, or if the church departs from her former faith or order, she is left out of the association. By these means, mutual acquaintance and communion has been begotten and promoted; the weak and oppressed have been relieved; errors in doctrine and practice have been exposed and guarded against; false teachers have been exposed, and warnings against them have been published; destitute flocks have been occasionally supplied; many have been animated and encouraged in preaching the gospel through the land, and in our new plantations in the wilderness. And it is hoped that these duties will yet be more attended to, and that greater blessings will hereafter be granted. For our Lord said to his disciples, I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come he shall guide you into all truth. He had just before said, The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service. John xvi. 2, 12, 13. And what is there that is harder to bear than to hear of being killed for Christ's sake? Reviling and lying on the one hand, and worldly enticements and flatteries on the other, are much harder to stand boldly against than open violence, torture and death. For the earth helped the woman, when she was enduring bloody persecution, and the people forced her persecutors to desist from their cruel measures. But it is very hard to make the people believe, that we are suffering for the cause of Christ,



when we refuse to call in the power of the magistrate to support religious ministers, or to punish any who injure us on religious accounts. Yet God says, Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Rom. xii. 19. Deceit and cruelty have ever prevailed more in the world, under the mask of religion and government, than they possibly could in any other way. Therefore our Lord requires his ministers to depart out of every city or house where they refuse to receive his gospel, and he says, Freely ye have received, freely give. Matt. x. 8, 15. But this command has ever been violated, where teachers have been supported by the sword of the magistrate. And the combination of teachers and rulers, in schemes of power and gain, under the name of Christianity, has filled the world with blood and slavery. And I believe that this combination is the beast and the false prophet, who will be cast into the burning lake. Rev. xix. 11—21. For where ministers are supported by the sword, deceitful men are armed against the children of God. And where that power is renounced, many will require the ministers of Christ to go a warfare at their own charges, because he says, Freely ye have received, freely give. As if freedom belonged only to ministers, while the people are slaves to their lusts. For God says, To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. Rom. vi. 16.

But our associations appeared to be so helpful to guard against these evils, and to promote real religion, that the churches which held to mixed communion began a yearly meeting in 1785, under the name of, The Groton Conference. And it now includes the Baptist churches of Dartmouth, New Bedford, two in Rehoboth, two in North Kingstown, one in South Kingstown, New Shoreham, two in Westerly, and one in each of the towns of Groton, Stonington, Lyme, Saybrook, Sutton, Preston and Canterbury, extending over

part of three States. The church in Dighton, the second in Attleborough, and some others, have given up communion in the ordinance of the Supper with any who were only sprinkled in infancy, and the rest of those churches appear inclined to do the same, and to come into fellowship with our associated churches. The old Baptist churches have revived their associations, since the year 1774, though the second churches in Swansea and Newport do not attend them, nor the first in Cumberland. But the churches of Johnston, Smithfield, two in Rehoboth, two in Scituate, two in Gloster, two in Warwick, the first in the towns of Foster, Coventry, North Kingstown, and Richmond, one in East Greenwich, the second in Cheshire, and the third in Shaftsbury, are in that connection. The Baptist churches who hold the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, have also their annual meetings. Of these are the third church in Newport, the first in Hopkinton, the second in New London, and the church in Bristol in Connecticut. There are a number more of Baptist churches in various parts of our land which have not joined to any association, but they are coming into them from year to year, while many others are formed. I have also heard of a few Baptist churches upon our eastern coasts, who do not hold with other churches there about the doctrines of grace ; but I have not obtained so distinct account of their affairs and connections as may be serviceable to the public. The world is so full of controversy, that all our powers ought to be engaged to promote truth and peace among all men. And for this end God says, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy ; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. For perverse disputings, profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called,

all proceed from the love of money, which is the root of all evil. I Tim. vi. 5, 10, 17—20. The knowledge of the truth is ever the same, in every age, and every country; but the opposition of false notions of knowledge, has filled the world with controversy and confusion. Further evidence of this will appear in the following history of particular churches, and of the oppressions which many have endured.



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF NEW ENGLAND ABOUT BAPTISM.—THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN BOSTON FOR FIFTY YEARS.—AND TO THIS TIME.—OF MR. ROOTS.—THE BEGINNING OF THEIR SECOND CHURCH.—THEIR HISTORY FOR TWENTY YEARS.—AND TO THE PRESENT TIME.—OF THE PUBLICATIONS OF THEIR MINISTERS.—OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK.—OF THE FIRST IN MIDDLEBOROUGH.—OF THEIR HISTORY TO THIS TIME.—OF THE SECOND IN MIDDLEBOROUGH.—OF THE THIRD.—OF BRIDGEWATER.—OF MARSHFIELD.—AND CARVER.<sup>1</sup>

Our fathers fled to America for religious purity and liberty, with a persuasion that each believer stands in the same relation to his children, as Abraham did to his, in the covenant of circumcision. But soon after they came to Boston, a difficulty arose about their children who were grown up so as to have families and yet were not true believers themselves, so as to bring their children upon their own faith to baptism. The church in Dorchester wrote to the church in Boston, to inquire whether a grandfather might not bring such infants? Mr. Cotton and his church concluded that he might, only with two cautions. “1. That the grandchild, baptized by the right of the grandfather’s covenant, be committed to the grandfather’s education. 2. That the parents of the child, do not thereby take occasion to neglect the due and seasonable preparation of themselves for entrance into covenant with God and his church.” This was dated December 16, 1634, about four years after Boston was planted. And on October 11, 1648, Mr. Cotton wrote to a friend in England, and said, “Though they be not fit to make such a profession of visible faith as to admit them to the Lord’s table, yet they may make profession full enough to receive them to

<sup>1</sup>This chapter and those which succeed it, are a review, with many enlargements, of the history of particular churches, already given. As being not a continuation of the history, but virtually an appendix, though for many reasons the most valuable part of the work, they are put in smaller type.—ED.

baptism, or to the same state Ishmael stood in after the circumcision.”<sup>1</sup> But Ishmael and Esau were both excluded from the covenant of circumcision long before the passover was instituted, of which servants were obliged to partake, as well as all the children of Israel. And Mr. Henry Dunstar, the first president of Cambridge college, saw their mistake in these things so clearly, that he boldly preached against infant baptism, and for believers’ baptism, in the pulpit at Cambridge in 1653, the year after Messrs. Clarke, Holmes and Crandal were imprisoned at Boston, only for worshipping God by themselves, without leave from the ruling powers in the Massachusetts. But those powers compelled Mr. Dunstar to resign his office in the college; and he removed out of their jurisdiction, and spent the rest of his days, even five years, at Scituate in Plymouth colony.

In the year 1655, Thomas Gould, of Charlestown, was so fully convinced that infants had no right to baptism, that he refused to bring his child thereto; but for this he was censured in the church and prosecuted in their courts, until some Baptists came to him out of England, and they formed a Baptist church there, May 28, 1665, and Gould became their pastor. But the leaders of this church were fined and imprisoned, from time to time, until a sentence of banishment was passed against Thomas Gould, William Turner and John Farnum; and because they would not banish themselves, they were imprisoned at Boston, in July, 1668, where they were confined about a year. But in the Indian war, seven years after, a company of those Baptists were sent out against the enemy, and Turner was their captain, and sacrificed his life for the government by which he had been persecuted. And in January, 1678, this church had increased so much, that they concluded to build them a meeting-house in Boston, though with so much caution as not to let the ruling powers know what it was designed for, until they met in it, February 15, 1679. But in May following a law was made, to forbid all persons to erect or make use of any house for public worship, without license from the ruling powers, upon penalty of forfeiting the house and land, and all private ways leading to it. And a synod was called in September, who gave it as their opinion, that suffering those Baptists to meet for worship by themselves, was a cause of the judgments of God upon the land; therefore their meeting-house was nailed up by order of court in March, 1680, and Dr. Increase Mather published a book against them the same month, in which he said, “Antipædobaptism is a blasted error.”<sup>2</sup> But he and his brethren met with such cruel oppression soon after, as moved them to procure a special act, to exempt Boston from any compulsive power for the support of any religious ministers. And he and his son Cotton Mather, with Mr. John Webb, went into the

<sup>1</sup>Increase Mather on the first principles of New England about baptism, 1675, pp. 2, 3, 6.

<sup>2</sup>Divine Right of Infant Baptism, p. 20.

house which their party had nailed up, and assisted in ordaining a Baptist minister, as a pastor of that Baptist church. Mr. Gould was a pastor of that church, from its beginning until his death about 1676; and he was such an example of meekness, faith and patience as is seldom found. Mr. Isaac Hull was called to the pastoral office in that church in the time of their sufferings, and continued therein till 1689, and how much longer, their records do not discover. Mr. John Russell, who suffered imprisonment for the cause of conscience, was ordained a pastor of that church, July 28, 1679, and he wrote a defence of their cause in 1680, which was printed in London, with a preface by six noted ministers there. But he was taken away by death, December 21, 1680, much lamented by his people; and his posterity are numerous and respectable in these parts to this day. Their next minister was Mr. John Emblen, from England, who ministered to them from 1684, to 1699, or thereabouts. He appears to have been well esteemed among them, as far as I could obtain any information. After his death the church wrote again to England for a minister, but obtained only a respectful letter from thence. They wrote also to Mr. William Screven in South Carolina, who had been of this church, but he could not leave his flock there. Therefore in 1708, they called Mr. Ellis Callender to be their minister, who had been a member of their church ever since 1699, and he continued in high esteem among them until 1726.

His son, Mr. Elisha Callender, was wrought upon by divine grace very early, and joined that church on August 10, 1713; and he was educated in the university at Cambridge, and was ordained a pastor of that church May 21, 1718, by the help of three Congregational ministers in Boston, before named. And this transaction, with his correspondence with friends in England, and other information, moved Thomas Hollis, Esq., of London, to become the greatest benefactor to the university at Cambridge of any one man in the world. Mr. Elisha Callender was a very faithful and successful minister of the gospel, until he fell asleep in Jesus, March 31, 1738. Mr. Jeremy Condry was educated in the college at Cambridge, where he took his first degree in 1726; after which he went over to England, from whence he was called by this church, and was ordained their pastor February 14, 1739. But he had quite other sentiments, concerning the nature and power of the gospel, than those of his predecessors; and he opposed the powerful work which came on in Boston the year after he was ordained, and another church was formed in a way of separation from him; and the First Baptist church in Boston was in a declining condition, until they called and settled Mr. Samuel Stillman as their pastor, January 9, 1765, when Mr. Condry resigned his office, and lived a retired life, well esteemed among his acquaintance, until he died, August 9, 1768, aged fifty-nine. A revival of religion began in that church in 1769, which caused the addition of eighty members in three years, to a church which had not



seventy members before. The Congregational ministers of Boston were much alarmed at this increase of the Baptists, and published several things to guard against them, and to draw young people into their own communion. One of them had published a book against the work of God in 1743, when many were drawing off from unconverted ministers, and then he said, "No man becomes a minister, or a communicant in our churches, until he hath been severely examined about his *regeneration*, as well as conversation." But he published another book in 1772, to guard against the Baptists, in which he said, "The divinely appointed way, in which persons become members of the visible church of Christ, is utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that, in order to their being so, they must be the subjects of *saving faith*, or judged to be so."<sup>1</sup> Thus do men condemn themselves. When the American war began in Boston, this church was much scattered, and their pastor removed to Philadelphia; and after his return and his brethren, earthly-mindedness greatly prevailed, until the year 1785, when religion was again revived, which added fifty members more in three years. In 1790, a happy work of the Spirit of God was again granted in Boston, and above seventy members were received into the First Baptist church there in about two years, and their present number is two hundred and sixty-seven, besides all that have died, have been dismissed or excluded.

Another minister, who is a member of this church, is not to be forgotten. Mr. Peter Philanthropos Roots, A. M., was born at Symsbury, in Connecticut, where his father was minister,<sup>2</sup> March 27, 1765. But as many of the people disliked his father's searching preaching, he requested a dismission, which was granted, and he went and settled at Rutland, in Vermont, where a happy work of grace was granted in 1783, when his son experienced a change of heart; and he was educated in Dartmouth College, after which he was licensed to preach in the Congregational way, in March, 1790. He had many scruples about infant baptism while he was at college, and they followed him afterwards, until he made them known to the most able ministers of his own denomination, desiring them to shew him a divine warrant for that practice, if they could, as he had no desire to become a Baptist, if he could avoid it with a clear conscience. But as they could not satisfy him, and he obtained full conviction that a credible profession of saving faith was a necessary qualification for baptism, he came to Boston, and was baptized and joined the First Baptist church there, June 3, 1792. And the church being satisfied with his qualifications for an itinerant minister, called others to assist in his ordination at Providence, September 4, 1792, the day before the Commencement at the university there; and in the winter following he travelled and preached the gospel through all the States as far as Georgia. And Mr. Roots has devoted himself to the work ever since, often preaching to destitute churches in various parts of our country, and he has been received to preach in the pulpits of many Con-

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 57, 171.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Benaiah Roots.

gregational ministers, as well as in places where no steady worship had been maintained; and as inquiry was often made, why he embraced the Baptist principles, he published a book to give the reasons thereof near the close of 1794.

As the Second Baptist church in Boston began in a way of separation from the First, they gave them the following reasons for it:—

1. We have for a considerable time been dissatisfied with Mr. Condry's doctrine, being of opinion, from many discourses which we have heard him deliver from the pulpit, and from conversation with him at several times, that he is what we call an Arminian, in that we apprehend he holds general redemption, is a free-willer, holds to falling from grace, and denies original sin. We mean by his denying original sin, that he softens, moderates and explains away the guilt, malignity, corruption and depravity of human nature exactly as the high Arminian clergy forever do. 2. We conceive that he denies the doctrines of election and predestination. If Mr. Condry does not deny these doctrines, we freely confess that we do not understand the scope or design of his sermons, nor of his conversation when we have heard him discourse on these points of our faith. He publicly owned at a church meeting, that he never had preached election, and believed he never should; alleging as a reason for it, that if he should preach up election, he should offend the greater part of his church. This excuse we look upon to be no sufficient reason for his declining to instruct his people in this important doctrine, but it rather ought to have animated him, if he believed this doctrine himself, to set his church right in an article of such importance. We hope we need not take up your time nor our own in proving that it is the indispensable duty of a faithful minister of Christ, to declare to his church the whole counsel of God, let who will be offended thereat; so that we conclude that Mr. Condry does not believe the doctrine of election himself. 3. We are enough dissatisfied with his way of thinking on that great, that most solemn doctrine of regeneration. Whenever we have heard him discourse on the new birth, his sermons were so ill-grounded, so intermixed with man's free-will agency, and so widely different from what our Lord taught and intended thereby, that we cannot avoid questioning whether he ever experienced the saving operation of that most important doctrine in his own soul. 4. We were sufficiently affrighted at a declaration in one of his sermons, that Christians cannot know or distinguish the operation of the Spirit of God upon their souls, from the operations of their own minds. This assertion we look upon to be of the most dangerous tendency; a striking at the root and main evidence of the Christian consolation and hope. .... We are now willing to return to our former places with you, if we can find that your principles and practices are the same with those on which, by the grace of God, our church was first founded. But if your articles of faith are, in fact, contrary to those on which this church was first established, you cannot, we think, justly blame us for separating from you, and uniting with others who are like minded with ourselves. The Lord give you understanding in all things, and may your hearts be directed into the love of God, and to be ready always to give an account of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

JAMES BOUND,  
JOHN DABNEY,

THOMAS BOUCHER,  
JOHN PROCTOR.

Boston, September 29, 1742.

The first two of these men came formerly from England, the third from Wales, and the fourth was a schoolmaster in Boston. Mr. Ephraim Bound, son to James, met with a happy change in those times, and was baptized by Elder Moulton, of Brimfield, and he began to preach the gospel in this new society. And as they obtained no satisfaction from the old church, James Bound, John Procter, Ephraim Bosworth, John Dabney, Thomas Boucher, Ephraim Bound and Thomas Lewis formed a new church in Boston, July 27, 1743, and elected Ephraim Bound as their pastor. His human learning was not great, but his powers of mind, and his spiritual teaching, made him an excellent teacher and minister of the gospel. But as most of the old Baptist ministers and churches in our country were prejudiced against the late revival of religion therein, these people found it difficult to obtain help in the ordination of their minister. Elder Wightman, of Groton, in Connecticut, was clear in that work, but he was advanced in years, and could not well travel so far as Boston; therefore this church sent some of their members to meet him in Warwick, where Mr. Bound was ordained, September 7, 1743, by the help of Elder Wightman, and Elder Greene, of Leicester. And many subjects of the late work of grace in the land joined this church in Boston, from Newton, Needham, Medfield, and other places. Deacon Ephraim Bosworth, of the town of Hull, having no children, gave this church a good estate, which they still enjoy. Also in the month of February, 1749, this church received the following generous donation from England, viz. :—From the Rev. John Gill, D. D., for the communion table, one large cup, four smaller ones, two dishes and two plates, also one large, rich damask table cloth; also seven complete sets of baptismal garments, namely, one for the minister, and three for men and three for women; also books to the amount of about fifty dollars. At the same time they received a further gift of forty-eight volumes of the late Rev. Mr. Hill's Sermons; (an Independent minister in London, successor to Dr. Ridgely.) Mr. Hill's sermons were sent by his father, the editor, to be given away at the discretion of the church. And after the great earthquake in 1755, Mr. Bound set up a weekly lecture, which was attended by many from all parts of the town; "and many owned him to be the instrument of their conversion, who yet joined to Pædobaptist churches; and he was greatly respected by people of various denominations, and especially by his own society. But in the midst of his usefulness, it pleased God to seize him with a paralytic disorder, in the morning of December 17, 1762, from which he never recovered, though he revived so as to preach a few sermons." Mr. Bound died, much lamented, though with great comfort in his own soul, June 18, 1765. This church had increased under his ministry to about a hundred and twenty members; and as soon as he was taken ill, they not only obtained occasional supplies from sister churches, but also sent for Mr. (now Dr.) Samuel Stillman,



from New Jersey. He was born in Pennsylvania, and educated in South Carolina, where he was ordained ; but the climate not suiting his constitution, he came and preached for some time at Bordentown, in the Jersey, from whence he came to Boston, and ministered a year to this church, and then, in September, 1764, he went to the First Baptist church in Boston, in which he has been a successful minister to this day.

The Second Baptist church in Boston being again left destitute, sought and obtained some help from sister churches, and looked out for another pastor, but could not obtain one in many years. Many of their old brethren were dead, and others were scattered into different parts of the land, so that they feared a dissolution of their church. Such is the changing state of things in this world, both as to our temporal and spiritual concerns ; and happy are they who humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time. Mr. John Davis paid this church a visit in the fall of 1769, and at their request, he removed there from the State of Delaware in May, and was ordained their pastor, September 9, 1770. He was educated in the college at Philadelphia, and was a man of great powers of mind, which he exerted in a noble manner in the cause of religious liberty, and for the welfare of our churches, until his health failed, which led him to ask a dismission, which was granted, July 19, 1772, and he sailed from Boston in August, and died near the Ohio, December 13, 1772, greatly lamented. Mr. Isaac Skillman, who was born in New Jersey, and educated at Princeton college, was the third pastor of this church, from September, 1773, to October, 1787, when he went back to New Jersey, and is now the pastor of the Baptist church at Salem in that State. Directly after his departure, this church called Mr. Thomas Gair to be their pastor, who was born in Boston, educated in the college at Providence, and ordained at Medfield, September 18, 1776, where he ministered to good purpose for ten years. But then, as some of their ablest brethren were dead, and peculiar difficulties arose in the church, they dismissed and recommended him ; and his labors were much blessed in Boston, until he was suddenly called away by death, April 27, 1790. And it is very remarkable that two pastors of this church, Davis and Gair, each died in his 36th year, and were the only ministers who had died out of the Warren Association since it was formed in 1767. In July after the decease of the latter, the church obtained a visit from Mr. Thomas Baldwin, who was born at Norwich, in Connecticut, December 23, 1753, and ordained at Canaan in New Hampshire, June 11, 1783, and preached with success in those parts until he was now called to Boston, where he was installed the pastor of this church, November 11, 1790. They had but forty-two members when Mr. Skillman came there in 1773, and when he left them they had increased to sixty-six, and when Mr. Gair died they had eighty-nine, and now have one hundred and fifty-eight.

These churches in Boston have equal liberties with other denominations, and no man in that town has been compelled to support any minister that he did not personally choose, since the year 1693; but this liberty is wickedly denied to the generality of our towns in the country, contrary to the promise of our delegates at Congress in 1774. Dr. Stillman preached the Election Sermon at Boston, May 26, 1779, when he clearly described the difference between civil States, and the government of the church of Christ, shewing that they ought to be entirely distinct. Yet in the constitution of our government, which was formed the winter following, church and State are confounded together. He had published four sermons in 1769, upon original sin, the efficacy of divine grace in conversion, justification alone by faith in the perfect righteousness of Christ, and the infinite importance of holy obedience to all the laws of Christ. This was in the beginning of a happy revival of religion in Boston. He has also published several other sermons and tracts since. Mr. Gair published an Ordination Sermon, which he delivered at Cambridge in 1783; and also a circular letter in the minutes of the Warren Association. Mr. Baldwin published a discourse in 1789, at the request of the Woodstock Association, to shew the reasons why the Baptist churches refuse to commune in the ordinance of the Supper with any who were only sprinkled in infancy. Upwards of two years after, the Rev. Noah Worcester, of Thornton, (N.H.) published an answer to him, wherein he set up godly sincerity as the rule of communion, and not any external mode of baptism. To this Mr. Baldwin replied, in March, 1794, which reply was so much esteemed, that it passed a second edition in about two months. He proved plainly, that this controversy all turns upon these two questions. 1. Who are the subjects of baptism according to the law or Christ? 2. What is the mode or manner of the baptism which he hath instituted? Mr. Worcester published another piece last winter, in which he refused to meet him upon this ground, saying, "The attempt would be to dissolve the distinction between the two denominations, rather than to open the way for a free communion between us, as two denominations. For I presume, that, were we agreed upon these two questions, we should not be two denominations."<sup>1</sup> Very true; and why should any be unwilling to have but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism? Yet this author has now published above a hundred pages upon other things, while he refused to come to the point in hand.

Bellingham, in the county of Norfolk, was so abusively treated by Congregational ministers, that they have never settled one of them in that town in above forty years past. The Baptist church there, was constituted October 15, 1750;<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Elnathan Wight was their first pastor, who was

<sup>1</sup>Worcester's Discussion, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>A Baptist church of fifteen members was formed in Bellingham, November 23, 1737. In 1742 and 1743 twelve were added to them, and in the latter year they built

ordained January 14, 1775, and was a faithful and useful minister there, until he was taken away by death, November 6, 1761, aged forty-six. Mr. Noah Alden was born in Middleborough, May 31, 1725, converted there in 1741, and was ordained at Stafford in Connecticut, June 5, 1755. But he was dismissed from thence, by the advice of a council, August 28, 1765, and he was installed at Bellingham, November 12, 1766, and continues their pastor to this day. Mr. Aaron Leland was raised up in this church, who is pastor of the Baptist church at Chester, in Vermont. Peace has generally been enjoyed in Bellingham, and they have been favored with several revivals of religion, though their church has never been very large. And the like may be said of the Baptist church in Wrentham, which was constituted in 1769.<sup>1</sup> William Williams, A. M., was ordained their pastor July 3, 1776. He was born in Pennsylvania, and was educated in Rhode Island College, being one of the first class therein, and he is now a Fellow of that corporation. He also keeps a Latin school, in which many young gentlemen have been fitted for the college. The Baptist church in Medfield was formed August 18, 1776, and Mr. Gair was ordained their pastor the next month, as was before observed. In 1787 their church had increased to eighty-one members; but in 1789 they dismissed fourteen members to form a church in Weston. Mr. Edward Clarke removed to Medfield soon after, and has preached there ever since, though he is not ordained. He sprang from the family who were fathers of the first Baptist church in Newport, which was formed in 1644; and he has published a reply to Messrs. Fish and Crane upon baptism, and some other things. The last Baptist church in the county of Norfolk was formed August 24, 1780, upon the borders of Stoughton and Braintree, where now is the town of Randolph. Former revivals of religion had been granted there, but the work was more powerful in that glorious year 1780. Joel Briggs, A. M., was born in Norton, April 15, 1757, educated in the college at Providence, and preached to this church about three years, before he was ordained their pastor, December 5, 1787. A powerful work was again wrought among them in 1790, which caused the addition of above twenty members to this church: and it extended its happy influence into Bridgewater and Abington.

The county of Plymouth, where our fathers began the settlement of New England, calls for our next attention. The first principles and measures of

a meeting-house. There is no record of the dissolution of this church; and it was held by Abial Fisher, D. D., for many years pastor in Bellingham, that the original church still continues. "Century Sermons, delivered in Bellingham in the year 1822," p. 6. Between 1743 and 1750 the church must have reached a low condition, if it did not lose its existence altogether. It is often impossible to decide whether a church became extinct, and another was afterwards formed in its stead, or whether it ceased active operations and was afterwards revived.—ED.

<sup>1</sup>September 29.—ED.



the first planters of the country, are as much retained here as in any part of the land. And this may be a cause why no person has been hanged in the county of Plymouth for sixty years past. The inhabitants are as much upon a level, and there are as few foreigners among them, as in any part of America. The people are generally supported by their own labors, and not by the labor of others. A powerful work of the Spirit of God in Middleborough, in and after 1741, prepared the way for the gathering of the first Baptist church in the county, in this town. After the death of their minister in April, 1744, Judge Oliver, who came from Boston, with a few more leading men in Middleborough, shut the next minister whom the church chose, and two-thirds of the people, out of their meeting-house, and from the use of their ministerial lands. And when a new precinct was constituted in February, 1743, consisting of part of Middleborough, and part of Bridgewater, the communicants therein were denied a dismission from the old churches for five years, lest if a church were formed in this precinct, they should call a minister whom the world did not like. The communicants therefore set up a meeting without license from arbitrary ministers, in December, 1747, and formed a church here February 16, 1748, and ordained a pastor therein the 13th of April following. But in the month between, their opponents held a parish meeting, and voted a large sum of money, to finish their meeting-house, and to hire other sort of preaching, and taxed the church and their minister, with the rest of the inhabitants, to pay it. But after distress had been made upon several of them, it appeared in a trial at Plymouth court, that said money was voted at an illegal meeting, and the case was turned against their collector. But they appealed to their Superior Court, and in the mean time sent an agent to Boston, and obtained an act of the legislature to establish said meeting as legal, and the Superior Court gave judgment against the defendant upon this act, which was passed after the suit was commenced in the first executive court. And this shews that the temporal interest of no people can be secure, where one party of ministers are supported by tax and compulsion.

In August, 1749, a dispute about baptism was brought into this church, which was managed with an unhappy temper by many, and caused great difficulties among the people. Nine members of this church, and one who was not a member, were baptized in September, and they set up a meeting from the church in October, because their minister and church did not immediately become Baptists, so as to obtain an exemption from taxes to Congregational ministers. They went the next year and joined to old Baptist churches, and obtained such an exemption. These things, with the unhappy temper which many discovered, caused a great fear in others that there was some secret iniquity in the Baptist principles, as tradition had long said there was. But they were led by degrees, to distinguish between the truth of God, and the corruptions of men who profess a zeal for it;

and their minister was baptized in August, 1751, and others afterwards, who yet held communion with those who were only sprinkled in infancy, until they were convinced that this was a practical saying that they were baptized when they believed in their consciences they were not. Therefore they formed a Baptist church here, January 16, 1756, and their former minister was installed their pastor the 23d of June following, in which office he is still continued. He was born at Norwich, in Connecticut, January 9, 1724, converted in 1741, and began to preach in September, 1746. This was then the only Baptist church in an extent of country of above a hundred miles long, from Bellingham to the end of Cape Cod, and near fifty miles wide, between Boston and Rehoboth. Their number was small for many years, though they had some revivings from time to time, until such a work came on in 1779, as increased their number in three years, from fifty-nine to one hundred and thirty-eight. And in forty years they have buried thirty-four, dismissed sixty-one, and excluded twelve, while ninety-one remain. Seven members of this church have been ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, namely, James Mellen, Abner Lewis, Asa Hunt, Elijah Coddington, Job Macomber, Samuel Nelson and David Leonard; the last of whom was ordained as an itinerant, December 17, 1794. He was born in Bridgewater, and educated at the college in Providence, where he took his first degree in 1792. His brother, Zenas Lockwood Leonard, graduated at that college in 1794, and was soon approbated by this church to preach the gospel, and has been accepted in that work in various parts of the country. Stephen Smith Nelson was a class-mate with him, and he was approbated as a gospel minister by this church last May. He is great-grandson to the first Baptist in Middleborough, of whom we shall say more presently. The pastor of this church published a discourse upon an internal call to preach the gospel, in 1754; and he has published the most since of any Baptist in America; but their value is left entirely to the judgment of the public.

The Second Baptist church in Middleborough was formed in the following manner:—Thomas Nelson, who was born here in June, 1675, discovered such evils in the second minister of the town, as caused him to examine the Scriptures concerning their principles; and finding nothing therein for infant baptism, he went and joined the First Baptist church in Swansea. In the year 1717 he removed into the south part of Middleborough, called Assawamset, his being the first English family who settled there. Baptist ministers frequently preached at his house, until he got one to preach there steadily, in the spring of 1753. This was Mr. Ebenezer Hinds, who was born in Bridgewater, July 29, 1719, and began to preach in 1749. About four miles southwestward from this meeting, in a place called Beechwoods, Mr. James Mead was ordained the pastor of a Separate church, October 3, 1751, and continued in that office until he died, October 2, 1756.

The majority of that church became Baptists soon after, and joined with Mr. Hinds's hearers in forming a Baptist church, November 16, 1757, and he was ordained their pastor, January 26, 1758.<sup>1</sup> They purchased a house and farm for the ministry, and built a convenient meeting-house forty-two miles from Boston. Mr. Nelson died before this church was constituted, aged eighty, but his widow lived to commune with them in the ordinance of the Supper, after she was a hundred years old. She died December 7, 1782, being a hundred and five years and seven months old; and she had then living of her posterity three hundred and thirty-seven, as near as the account could be collected; for some of them were in Nova Scotia. William, Samuel and Ebenezer Nelson, three of her grandsons, are now ordained Baptist ministers. Mr. Hathaway, a minister in Freetown, also sprang from this church. Such a revival of religion was granted among them in 1773, as increased the church to a hundred and four members the next year. But a number of them were dismissed to form a church in Freetown soon after, and they never have been so large since. Mr. Hinds has had two wives, and fifteen children, of whom he has buried eight; and the great expenses in his family, with different sentiments about the support of ministers and the government of the church, have caused many contentions among them, which have reduced the church to a much smaller number than they once had; yet he is still continued in his office there.

The Third Baptist church in Middleborough sprang chiefly from the First. The lands near the corners of Middleborough, Rochester, Wareham and Carver, were but little cultivated until 1754; and Baptist ministers were called to preach there from time to time afterwards, and persons from thence joined our church, until they obtained a dismission, and ten persons were formed into a church there, August 4, 1761.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Ebenezer Jones had preached to them for a while before, and he was ordained their pastor the 28th of October following. A revival of religion came on among them the next spring, which prevailed through the year, and spread its happy influence into many other societies, the good fruits whereof are visible to this day. Yet some evil behavior in Mr. Jones's wife, which drew him into a snare, caused a great division in the church and society in 1763, which terminated in his removal from them;<sup>3</sup> and he travelled and preached in

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Hinds was baptized by Mr. E. Moulton, and joined himself to the Second Baptist church in Boston, March 3, 1751.

<sup>2</sup>Six were from the First church, one from the Second, the other three had probably not been previously connected with any Baptist church.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>The chief offence of Mrs. Jones seems to have been the spreading of evil reports against the deacon of the church. These coming to the light, involved the whole church in dissension. On page 271, the blame in connection with this difficulty is charged to other parties than the pastor and his family. A letter of Mr. Backus to a son of Mr. Jones, written in 1805, shows that both that representation and the one above given were correct. He writes:—"Gospel rule was greatly disregarded on



various parts of our land, until he died in the county of Albany, in September, 1791. This church was in a furnace of affliction for several years; but in the spring of 1770, they obtained Mr. Asa Hunt to preach to them, and he was ordained their pastor, October 30, 1771.<sup>1</sup> He was born in Braintree, in July, 1744, and preached in Raynham for a year before he went to them, when he joined the First Baptist church in Middleborough. His preaching was very acceptable, and they gave him a good place for a settlement, beside the use of the ministerial lot; and they built a convenient meeting-house, above eleven miles from the First Baptist meeting-house in this town. And such a work of the Spirit of God began among them in March, 1780, as caused the addition of a hundred and thirteen members to their church by September, 1782, when they had a hundred and ninety-four in all.<sup>2</sup> But in the time of great changes in our country about money and worldly property, Mr. Hunt entangled himself so much in the affairs of this life, as caused much unhappiness, and he insisted upon a dismissal from his church, which they granted, though with reluctance, in December, 1789. He had been a journey into Virginia, where he preached to good purpose the year before, and he travelled into New Jersey and Pennsylvania after his dismissal; but he never removed his family. He was called to visit his eldest son, who was sick with the dysentery in the college at Providence, where the father was seized with the same distemper, and died there, September 20, 1791. His son recovered, while he was taken away; and his memory is precious to many, notwithstanding his imperfections. The church was in low circumstances for some time, and young people got to be so extravagant in vanity, that they could hardly be kept civil in times of public worship. But the church prevailed with Mr. Samuel Nelson to remove there to preach to them, in May, 1793. And in the beginning of the next month, such a divine influence was granted, that old Christians became all alive in religion, and such a concern for the soul and eternity appeared among old and young through all the busiest time in the summer, that they had frequent and crowded meetings, in season and out of season, without the least disturbance from vain persons, which before were so troublesome. Mr. Nelson was ordained their pastor January 16, 1794; and above thirty were added to their church in about a year. He was born in this town April 6, 1745, and is still useful in this church. Mr.

both sides. .... Your father often confessed his faults. .... His wife also appeared to repent of her faults, and had hope in her death. I preached at her funeral, August 13, 1766. Both of them were of good moral character and of Christian behavior, only in the things which I have mentioned."—ED.

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Backus preached at Mr. Hunt's ordination, from II Cor. iii. 6. The sermon was published with the title, "Evangelical Ministers described, and distinguished from Legalists."—ED.

<sup>2</sup>See pp. 271, 272.—ED.

John Tripp and Mr. Simeon Coombs have been of this church, who are now ordained ministers in other places.

A few persons in the west part of Bridgewater had been members of the First Baptist church in Middleborough near thirty years, before a happy revival of religion began there in 1779, when their number increased so much that they were encouraged to hold meetings among themselves, from time to time, until sixteen members were dismissed, and a church was formed there, June 7, 1785. Mr. George Robinson had preached to them for a year before, and he became their pastor. He was born in Attleborough in November, 1754, and was ordained at Killingly, in Connecticut, November 13, 1776, where he ministered for more than seven years. But such difficulties then arose in their church, partly occasioned by the public disorders in our country, that they called a council, and, by their advice, dismissed and recommended him, and he removed to Bridgewater, where many blessings have been granted under his ministry. Mr. Seth Howard was baptized there, March 10, 1779, and was one of the first members of this church, and he continued in their communion, until he died in a joyful manner, October 11, 1794, aged nearly ninety-two. Mr. Eleazar Snow, who was born in Bridgewater, July 25, 1701, also joined the First Baptist church in Middleborough, and was then one of the first members of this church, and is now the oldest man in Bridgewater.<sup>1</sup>

Some persons of Marshfield joined the First Baptist church in Boston, before Elder Callender died in 1738, and others joined their Second church in Elder Bound's time; but their number was small, until Deacon Josiah Eames invited Baptist ministers to preach there in 1773,<sup>2</sup> and a meeting was set up, in which Thomas Eames began to preach. But these

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Snow, full of divine consolation, died February 18, 1796.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Backus visited Marshfield, December 24, 1773, and labored there a week. He writes in his Diary: "I learn that Mr. Callender of Boston baptized some persons of this town at Boston, near forty years ago, and that two men named Macomber, and one Mrs. Briant joined Mr. Bound's church, above twenty years ago. Deacon Josiah Eames and his wife, Thomas Eames and his wife, David Thomas Junior and his wife, Thomas Joyce and his wife, and some others, seem not only to be convinced that the parish worship is very corrupt, but also that the Baptist principles are right; were very thankful for my coming, and there is a hopeful prospect of an agreeable society being formed here." June 5, 1774, Elder Hunt of Middleborough, baptized in Marshfield, Thomas Eames, Grace, his wife, and Rebecca, his mother; Thomas Joyce and Lucy, his wife; Hannah Williamson, and Mary Thomas. March 5, 1781, Elder Hunt wrote:—"At Marshfield, last week, I preached five sermons, and baptized six persons. The work increases. I left a number under powerful convictions. The handful of brethren are joyful and lively, and much encouraged. There is considerable opposition; but some persons of note are brought to favor the work." Mr. Hunt labored again in Marshfield in the revival in 1786. Eleven of the constituent members of the church in Marshfield were dismissed from his church in Middleborough.—ED.

men removed away, and the last of them is now a pastor of a church in Islesborough in the county of Hancock; and the Baptists in Marshfield were in low circumstances, until a revival was granted in 1786, and they built them a meeting-house the next year, and a church was formed among them, June 11, 1788. They received assistance from neighboring ministers, from time to time, until Mr. Joseph Butterfield came to preach there steadily in the fall of 1791, and he was ordained their pastor, May 16, 1792. His gifts were promising, and his hearers increased for some time; but from imprudent conduct, he proceeded to the use of deceitful means to obtain a temporal living. Therefore a mutual council was called May 8, 1793, which advised the church to depose him from his office, which they did, and he confessed it to be just. He was then forgiven and restored as a brother, and recommended to another church, and he removed to Weston, and lately into the District of Maine. They have experienced many trying things since at Marshfield, but it is hoped that all will work for their spiritual good.

The town of Carver was formerly the south parish in Plympton, between Middleborough and Plymouth. Their first meeting-house was built near the north end of the parish, because most of the people lived there. But when the south end was also planted and cultivated, the inhabitants claimed a right of having it removed into the centre; and because this was denied them, they built another meeting house towards the south end and obtained occasional preaching in it for some years. At length they got Baptist ministers to preach there, and their principles prevailed, until a Baptist church was formed there, July 13, 1791,<sup>1</sup> and Mr. John Tripp<sup>2</sup> was ordained their pastor the 28th of September following. Most of the first members were dismissed from the Third Baptist church in Middleborough, as others have been since. And a happy revival of religion in both churches in 1793, caused a large increase of this church. Mr. Tripp preached an Ordination Sermon at Barnstable, April 29, 1795, which was printed soon after at Boston.

In January, 1793, a great revival of religion began in Plymouth, the first town that was planted in New England; and it prevailed to a greater degree than any work of the Spirit of God has done there since the year 1742. Their minister, the Rev. Dr. Robbins, was much engaged in it, and in the summer of 1794, he baptized one woman by immersion, which was a new thing in that town.

<sup>1</sup>This church was formed of nine men and three women.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>John Tripp was licensed by the Third Baptist church in Middleborough, September 18, 1787. Elder Backus preached his Ordination Sermon.—ED.





## CHAPTER XXXVII.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN SWANSEA.—OF THE SECOND CHURCH THERE.—OF TWO IN REHOBOTH THAT ARE DISSOLVED.—OF SIX CHURCHES NOW THERE.—OF MR. WINCHESTER.—OF MR. ELLIS.—OF THE LAST BAPTIST CHURCH IN REHOBOTH.—OF TAUNTON.—OF ATTLEBOROUGH.—OF DIGHTON.—FREETOWN. — NEW BEDFORD AND DARTMOUTH. — RAYNHAM. — HARWICH. — BARNSTABLE. — MARTHA'S VINEYARD.

The first Baptist church in the Massachusetts is in Swansea, which was originally in Plymouth colony, the first in New England. Mr. John Miles was a father of the Baptist churches in Wales, which began in 1649; and he was pastor of the Baptist church in Swansea in that country, until he was ejected from thence by a cruel act of parliament, which turned about two thousand teachers out of their places in 1662. He then came over to our country, and brought their book of records with him, which is in Swansea to this day, containing many things concerning the first Baptist churches in Wales, that are nowhere else to be found, and which have been lately transcribed and sent over to them. Nicholas Tanner, Obadiah Bowen, John Thomas, and others, also came over to this country; and one of Bowen's posterity is now Chancellor of the university at Providence.<sup>1</sup> A Baptist church was formed in Rehoboth in 1663, and Mr. Miles was their pastor; and four years after, they obtained a grant of the town of Swansea, from the legislature at Plymouth; and there have been none but Baptist churches in that town to this day. Mr. Miles often visited and labored with his brethren at Boston, in the time of their sufferings; and he continued the faithful pastor of the church in Swansea, until he fell asleep there, in a good old age, February 3, 1683. Mr. Samuel Luther, who had been a representative for Swansea in their legislature, and was otherwise useful in the town, was ordained a pastor of this church, July 22, 1685, by the

<sup>1</sup>Hon. Jabez Bowen.—ED.

assistance of the elders Hull and Emblen of Boston ; and he was much esteemed at home and abroad, until he died in 1717 ; and his posterity are numerous to this day. Mr. Ephraim Wheaton, who lived within the bounds of Rehoboth, had been a colleague with him about thirteen years, and he was a faithful and successful minister until he died, April 26, 1734, aged seventy-five. He baptized and received fifty members into his church in five years after a revival began in 1718, of which he wrote an account to Mr. Hollis in London.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Samuel Maxwell was ordained a colleague with him, April 18, 1733 ; but he was unsteady in his sentiments, and in 1738, he embraced the opinion of keeping the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, which caused his dismissal from this church, April 15, 1739.<sup>2</sup> Elder Benjamin Herrington, formerly of Narragansett, was their next pastor, and was installed in this church, August 18, 1742, and he had a crowded audience for several years ; but then he was accused of the sin of uncleanness, and he went off to Canterbury in Connecticut, where he preached to a few people, and lived in obscurity to old age. In March, 1748, Mr. Jabez Wood, of Middleborough, was called to preach to this church, and he was ordained their pastor, September 5, 1751. He was grandson to Mr. Thomas Nelson ; but as the old gentleman judged that Wood had made use of unjust and deceitful measures to obtain that place, where was a good farm for the ministry, he removed his membership to the First Baptist church in Rehoboth, and others went to other churches ; and the first church in Swansea was in a declining condition, until Elder Wood asked and received a dismissal in 1779, and he removed into Vermont, where he died in 1794. But as the enemy had burnt their meeting-house, and house for the ministry at Warren, three miles off, in May, 1778, the two churches agreed for the present to meet at Swansea, and Elder Thompson was received into this church, October 7, 1779, and has been their pastor ever since. And such a rain of righteousness was granted there in 1780, as caused the addition of above ninety members to that church in two years, and they have had other revivals since.

The Second church in Swansea was formed upon different principles from the First, and they held the laying on of hands upon every member as a term of communion, and did not sing in their public worship. Men who removed from Providence, and from other places, set up worship by themselves there about 1680, and continued it until they formed a church, and Mr. Thomas Barnes was ordained their pastor in 1693 ; and he was

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 510.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 275. A letter from Mr. Maxwell to Elisha Callender shows that at one time he was greatly troubled, and greatly troubled his church, upon the question of infant baptism, he having publicly declared that he had been "much exercised with doubting whether or no infants, though not particularly expressed, might not be baptized in some of those households."—ED.



well esteemed in his place, until he died, June 8, 1706. Samson Mason was a soldier in Cromwell's army, and he came over to America upon the turn of times in England, and settled in Rehoboth, and his posterity are now as numerous as, perhaps, those of any man who came to our country in his day, and they have had the chief lead in this church. His sons were Noah, Samson, James, John, Samuel, Joseph, Isaac, Pelatiah and Benjamin. James and John went to Boston, but six of the others lived in Rehoboth and Swansea, until the youngest of the six was seventy years old. Isaac Mason was ordained a deacon in this church, at the same time that Barnes was ordained their pastor, and he lived to January 25, 1742. His brother Joseph was ordained their pastor in July, 1709, and continued so till he died, May 19, 1748. Mr. John Peirce was ordained a colleague with him, October 19, 1715, and died September 8, 1750, being each of them near ninety, and their memory is precious to their posterity. Mr. Pelatiah Mason was born in March, 1669, and died in March, 1763, and three of his sons have been pastors of this church. Elder Job Mason was born February 28, 1695, ordained May 22, 1738, and died July 17, 1775. His character as a judicious man, a good preacher, and an exemplary walker, was high among his acquaintance. Elder Russel Mason was born April 22, 1714, ordained November 2, 1752, and is now able to preach frequently, and to discharge other duties of his office to the acceptance of his brethren. Elder John Mason was born in October, 1716, ordained March 26, 1788, and is well esteemed in his office. In the mean time, as their church has greatly increased in latter years, and they had many who joined it from distant places, and gifted men were raised up among them, they ordained many elders. Elder Benjamin Mason was ordained September 15, 1784, Elder Nathaniel Cole, December 12, 1787, and Elder Philip Slade, October 15, 1788. Elder Cole is now settled in Connecticut, while the others remain in this church in Swansea. It is also to be observed, that a church in Rehoboth sprang from this church in 1753, and a large part of another church ten years after to go to Nova Scotia. When all North America was ceded to Great Britain, Nathan Mason and his wife, Thomas Lewis and his wife, Oliver Mason and his wife, with Experience Baker, of this church, and Benjamin Mason and his wife, Charles Seamans and his wife, Gilbert Seamans and his wife, from other churches, were formed into a church, and Nathan Mason was ordained their pastor, April 21, 1763, and they went and settled at the head of the Bay of Fundy. But after some years they removed back to New England, and most of them went and settled in Berkshire, in the Massachusetts. It is also to be observed, that the powerful work of grace which was wrought in this country, under the ministry of men who held to infant baptism, and who had oppressed the Baptists, was attended with such evil reports as prejudiced the Baptists against the work for many years. But some ministers from

New Jersey came and preached among the Baptists in these parts, in and after 1754, which served to remove those prejudices, in some measure. And in 1756, Colonel Andrew Cole, of Swansea, invited some of our new ministers to preach at his house, and from time to time afterwards. And though these Baptist churches had received members by a general confession of their faith, yet in a great revival which began in the fall of 1771, a particular relation of experiences of an inward change of heart was introduced, which produced powerful effects upon many. Several hundred persons were added to the Baptist churches in Swansea and Rehoboth within two years after. The work was still greater in and after 1780, and singing in public worship was soon after introduced into the Second church in Swansea. But as they still held laying on of hands as a term of communion, a number drew off, and formed another church, and ordained Mr. Michael Eddy as their pastor, in August, 1785; though it is since dissolved, and he removed to Newport in 1790, where he is still useful.

Rehoboth is a large town, extending from Taunton and Dighton to Providence, about twelve miles; and in 1791, there were four thousand, seven hundred and ten persons therein, and ten religious societies, which is more than we have in any other town of their numbers in these parts. Cruel oppression, on the one hand, and an abuse of liberty, on the other, have been the cause of it. Many had joined with the Baptists in Swansea, from time to time, until Mr. John Comer came and assisted in forming a church in Rehoboth. Some account of him is in Volume I, pages 496, 497; Volume II, pages 16—22, 28—31. He was an excellent preacher of the gospel, and an eminent instrument of reviving doctrinal and practical religion in Newport, for six years before he removed to Rehoboth in August, 1731; and a Baptist church was formed there, January 20, 1732, and he became their pastor, and it increased to ninety-five members in less than two years. And in that time he went and labored in Sutton, Leicester, Middleborough and other places. But he exerted his powers so much in this noble cause, that he fell into a consumption, and died joyfully, May 23, 1734, before he was thirty years old. His son is now a member of the Baptist church in Warren, and he lent me his father's diary, and other writings, which have been very serviceable in our history. Nathaniel Milard was ordained the next minister of this church, June 24, 1736. But his principles and conduct were corrupt, and he was dismissed in 1742, after which he went off with another woman instead of his wife. And as Mr. Maxwell had retracted his opinion concerning the Sabbath, this church called him to be their pastor, in October, 1745. But in about three years, Congregational ministers, who had oppressed the Baptists, had invited him to preach for them, and he yielded so much to them that this church dismissed him, and he published a complaint about it in 1749.<sup>1</sup> He often

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 275, 434.—ED.

preached in other places, and was esteemed as a pious man, and lived to a great age, but never had the charge of any other church.<sup>1</sup> In the mean time, a Second Baptist church was formed in the northeast part of Rehoboth,<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Richard Round was ordained their pastor, July 13, 1743; and in nine years it increased to forty members. He was one of the seals of Mr. Comer's ministry, and preached the gospel faithfully, until his health failed, and he removed to the south part of the town, for the benefit of the sea air. And about that time a division took place in both churches, and a part of both joined together at their first place of worship, and Elder Round was their pastor until he died, May 18, 1768, aged sixty-two. His character as a minister of the gospel, and as a pious man, was very good. Those churches are since dissolved.

Mr. John Hicks was born in Rehoboth, May 10, 1712, and became a member of the First Baptist church there, and then a preacher therein, until they gave him a call to be their pastor; but he did not accept it, because many of the church appeared to him to be unsound in principle, and to oppose the power of godliness. But after much labor, a new church was formed, and Mr. Hicks was ordained their pastor, November 10, 1762; and in the glorious year 1780, they had a hundred and six members.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Nathaniel Round, brother to Richard, was a member of this church, and called to preach the gospel therein; and on May 11, 1768, he was ordained as a minister of the gospel, to go and labor in Nova Scotia, with a people who went from these parts. He went accordingly, and was a successful laborer there for several years, and then he removed back, and settled in the east part of Attleborough, and preached occasionally round the country, until he died at home, July 18, 1781, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. Another church was raised out of this, in the following manner. A powerful work began among them in the fall of 1771, and Elder Hicks baptized forty persons, and then was taken sick in the winter, and Mr. Winchester came and baptized twenty more; and such power appeared to attend his

<sup>1</sup>This First Baptist church in Rehoboth was known as the Oak Swamp church. It had thirty constituent members, thirteen men and seventeen women, all dismissed from the church in Swansea. John Comer was publicly installed as their pastor, January 26, 1732. A revival commenced immediately. Converts were baptized in March, and every subsequent month of the year,—forty in all.

Mr. Millard had been a deacon in this church before he was ordained its pastor.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>This church was organized April 14, 1743. It consisted of nine men and nine women.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>This church was organized with fifteen male members. They joined the Warren Association in 1780. In their letter to that body, they say:—"It was a low time with us before the reformation; but the Lord was remarkably good to appear once more for our relief in that he hath poured out his Holy Spirit to the comforting and quickening of the saints, and the conviction of sinners; there being forty-one added since the fall past."—ED.



ministry, that many were taken with the opinion, that baptism by immersion ought not to be held as a term of communion in the church. A council was called upon it, in September, 1772, and they who were not convinced by them, formed another church, and ordained Mr. Jacob Hicks as their pastor, January 20, 1773. He is the eldest son of their old pastor, and was born January 1, 1740. This division caused much unhappiness for many years; but both societies have usually held their worship together in late times, and they now meet in the same house that was first built for Mr. Comer's church. Elder John Hicks is now so old and infirm as not to be able to preach, but he appears still steadfast in the faith and hope of the gospel. His son has none in his church at home but those who have been buried in baptism, and seems to have almost given up occasional communion with others; and so have other churches, with which he is connected. For as they communed with those who were only sprinkled in infancy, because they loved them as Christians, and not because they viewed them as baptized persons according to the written word, they have found this to be an impediment in the way of enforcing the written word as a rule in other cases. And to receive any member, to the grief of any already in the church, they also find to be unwarrantable. Another such church was formed on the north borders of Rehoboth, after a happy revival of religion there October 2, 1777; and Mr. James Sheldon of Providence, was ordained their pastor, September 6, 1780. And he purchased a good farm for sixteen hundred dollars; but after he had paid a thousand of it, he was pressed upon for the rest, in the trying year 1786, in such a manner as to compel him to sell it again, with the loss of about seven hundred dollars. And there was reason to conclude, that a hope of his removal from that people, and of breaking up that meeting, caused the Congregational party to press harder in this case, than they otherwise would have done. But be that as it may, Elder Sheldon removed his family back to where he had formerly lived, though he often came and ministered to this people for several years, and then he obtained a dismissal, and removed into the State of New York in 1792. This church have obtained occasional supplies since, from time to time, until Mr. Jeremiah Irons was ordained their pastor, September 24, 1795. He was born in Gloster, above Providence, October 14, 1765. In the east part of Rehoboth, a Baptist church was formed, January 17, 1780, in which were a number of very respectable members; but as they never obtained a pastor, they now often go to other meetings. Two Baptist churches have also been formed in Rehoboth, which refused to commune with any baptized persons but those who had laying on of hands and prayer after baptism. They likewise excluded singing in their public worship, as most of the old Baptists in New England did, before our great reformation. In order to form the first of these churches, above thirty persons were dismissed from the Second church in

Swansea, and formed a church in Rehoboth, and ordained Mr. Daniel Martin as their pastor, February 8, 1753; and Mr. Nathan Pierce was soon ordained a colleague with him. Mr. Martin published a discourse in 1770 against particular election and efficacious grace in conversion. But an answer to him was published the next year, which was convincing to many minds.<sup>1</sup> Elder Martin died in an advanced age, November 17, 1781, and Elder Pierce died in 1794. Elder Thomas Seamans had been a colleague with him for a number of years, and he still ministers to that people; but their number is small. Another church sprang from them, in the northeast corner of Rehoboth, and was formed on April 4, and two elders were ordained therein, April 20, 1789, viz., the elders Aaron Wheeler and Sylvester Round. The doctrines of grace, and the power of godliness, have lately gained ground among them.

Mr. Elhanan Winchester was born in Brookline, near Boston, September 19, 1751, and was very studious from a child; and he obtained a considerable measure of human learning, before he made a profession of religion, was baptized, and began to preach with much zeal. And his preaching in Rehoboth caused a separation in Mr. Peck's church,<sup>2</sup> and another church was formed, and he was ordained their pastor, September 4, 1771, before he was twenty years old. And though he was baptized himself, yet he was exceeding zealous for the communion of all Christians together, let them be sprinkled in infancy or baptized by immersion; and as his preaching appeared to be very powerful and successful, it caused a division in Elder Hicks's church before mentioned. But soon after Mr. Winchester was ordained, a Baptist minister pointed out to him the inconsistency of his conduct in such a manner, that, after eight month's consideration, he declared to his church, that he could no more administer the ordinance of the Supper to any who were only sprinkled in infancy, though he was still willing to discharge all the duties of his office to them that he could do with a good conscience. But upon this the majority of his church refused to let him preach another sermon among them; and they soon after censured him for not fulfilling his first covenant with them. Yet they called their way *large communion*, and the Baptist way *close communion*. This church ordained Mr. Jonathan Chaffee as their pastor, in May, 1778, but their church has decreased until it is now nearly dissolved. Mr. Winchester called a council of Baptist churches in December, 1772, which advised him to confess his imprudent conduct to that church, and then to offer himself as a member to some Baptist church. He did so, and was received into the church in Bellingham; after which he travelled and labored abundantly, through all

<sup>1</sup>The Doctrine of Sovereign Grace, opened and vindicated. By Isaac Backus; Providence, 1771.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>A Separate church in Rehoboth.—ED.

the country as far as South Carolina. But in the beginning of 1781, he was rejected by the Baptist church in Philadelphia, because the fathers of it discovered that he had fallen into the doctrine of universal salvation. He had preached there but a few months, but in that time he had admitted many members, by which means his party became the majority; therefore they sued for the meeting-house and the house for the ministry, with other property which belonged to that church. Though after much cost in courts, for several years, they were defeated, and the property secured to the original church. After this, he came and spent a year in New England, without visiting many of his old friends, and then returned to Philadelphia, from whence he sailed for England, in July, 1787. In London he published a book, in which he said:—"I have, at the expense of character and popularity with the religious world, at the hazard of temporal interest and emolument, and refusing no other sacrifice, in what I apprehended to be the cause of God and truth, come forth as a writing witness on this subject; and a defender of the faith which once I destroyed."<sup>1</sup> Though it is well known, that he concealed his opinion upon that subject as long as he could, and that he grasped at the temporal property of said church as long as he could hope for it. And what is the faith which he would now defend? Why he says:—"Punishment, without having the reformation and subjection of rebels for its end, is unworthy of the Being we adore." Again he says:—"Since goodness is the perfection of God, and evil the imperfection of the creature, there can be no doubt, that as good existed before evil, so it shall exist to all eternity, when evil shall be no more."<sup>2</sup> But how can any man believe, that the punishment which God has inflicted upon the fallen angels, for near six thousand years, is designed for their final salvation? Yea, or that the destruction of unbelievers in the wilderness, or of the Sodomites by fire from heaven, was designed for their endless happiness? How can any government or dominion be supported upon these principles? And as God was infinitely good before he created angels or men, how do we know that he will not reduce them all back again to nothing? For he created all things good, and the serpent persuaded our first mother, that death and ruin could not come from eating the forbidden fruit. And one apostle says to Christians, I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. II Cor. xi. 3. And another says, I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. Even as

<sup>1</sup>Preface to Winchester's Dialogues, 1788, pp. 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup>Winchester's Dialogues, pp. 23, 32, 33.



Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Jude 5—8. Here our times are exactly described by God, who saw them perfectly seventeen hundred years ago. Yet Winchester has followed others in denying that the words *everlasting* and *eternal*, when applied to future misery, mean without end. And he says:—"The foundation of endless misery, came from the pagan theology." Though in the same book he says:—"The great number of heathens, that die without ever being favored with the light of the gospel, and certainly without ever hearing of endless misery, convinces me, more than any logical arguments, that God has many ways of instructing and reclaiming his creatures, in another state, that we are at present unacquainted with."<sup>1</sup> And he has published this glaring contradiction now in Boston, seven years after he first published it in London. So God says, Their folly shall be manifest unto all men. II Tim. iii. 9. Mr. Winchester returned to America, and landed at Boston in July, 1794, and is spreading his opinions in this country; which makes it needful to hold up light against them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Winchester's Dialogues, pp. 30, 151; Boston edition, 1795, pp. 68, 158.

<sup>2</sup>The manuscripts of Mr. Backus furnish some additional facts which are worthy of notice in the history of Mr. Winchester, who, after his brilliant, but brief and erratic course as a Baptist, became a leader in American Universalism. One of Mr. Backus's papers is as follows:—

"Original Minutes about Elhanan Winchester, who hath been *given to change*.

"Elder Samuel Peck, of Rehoboth, having treated the Baptists with roughness, Elhanan Winchester from Brookline has taken advantage thereof, and gathered a society out of his, in a confused manner. The best account I have gained of it is this.

"He professed to have been converted last year, and began to preach at Brookline; but his father's maid soon appeared to be with child by him; yet he refused to make a confession of it, alleging that by covenant they were one before, though they had not the ceremony of external marriage. For this, Elder Hide's church barred his improvements there. But he went up to Canterbury and was baptized by Ebenezer Lyon, and joined with his church; and after gathering a number at Rehoboth, he, with two of Mr. Peck's members, viz., John Allyn and Simeon Bowen, went up to Canterbury, and at sacrament there, got so high in their views as to appoint his ordination, without any such thing being agreed upon when they went up, yea, he told Deacon Everett that he had not then concluded upon it in his own mind. And though Bowen now opposed it, yet they determined upon Lyon's coming for that purpose, the fourth of September. And the week before, he went to Brookline, and complied so far as to confess that he was wanting in not complying with the ordinance of man in marriage, for the Lord's sake, sooner than he did; upon which that church wrote a letter in his favor, with which his father, who is a deacon at Brookline, came and met Lyon and one of his members at Rehoboth, September fourth, and they with Elkanah Ingalls, (a young preacher in Elder Hicks's church, without

And the same may be said concerning ministerial tyranny. An instance of it was before given, in the selling of their ministerial lands in Rehoboth, and obtaining an act to incorporate the committees who should be annually chosen in each parish, to manage their funds of money, so that the interest thereof might support their ministers. The Congregational name was not in the original grant of those lands, though the produce of them is now claimed under that name. And since the foregoing account was written, a

his church's consent) with other private persons, laid on hands to ordain Winchester over this new gathered society. And next day he baptized nine, and four more on September ninth; next day came and preached at Raynham, as he had done before, and endeavored to alienate people from our church.

“Note. Mr. Winchester has since made a full and satisfying confession about his conduct before marriage, and also has retracted his joining in mixed communion at Rehoboth, for which the majority of his church rejected his preaching, and he with a minor part met by themselves; for which the others sent the following censure:—

“We, the church of Christ, who were formerly under the pastoral care of our brother, Elhanan Winchester, being met together, were all agreed that brother Elhanan Winchester has broken covenant, for which we admonish you to repentance in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SIMEON BOWEN, } In behalf of  
JOSEPH ALLYN, JR. } the Church.

Rehoboth, October 22, 1772.’

“Elder Winchester sent a notification to them to come to the council, dated December 18. They sent an answer, dated the 21<sup>st</sup>, wherein they give some reasons for their not coming; but as to their charge they say:—‘As to breach of covenant, charged in the admonition, there is a cloud of witnesses that heard him solemnly covenant and promise before God, angels and men, to walk in the open communion, to administer ordinances, to break the bread to all Congregational brethren as well as others; and that their different sentiments about baptism, were no more to him than their different complexion or stature, or the color of their clothes; with which he also invited the Congregational brethren into the church; and promised in the above named manner, that he would sooner die than break the covenant thus confirmed; therefore no man ought to disannul or add thereto. Gal. 3, 15.

JOSEPH ALLYN, 2d., in behalf, &c.’”

Mr. Backus wrote in his Diary:—“October 22, [1771.] Elhanan Winchester came to visit me, and gave me account that he was born in September 1751; that he experienced a change in the spring, 1770; was (as he believes) called to preach the beginning of the next October, was baptized and joined with Ebenezer Lyon's church in Canterbury last winter; began to preach at Rehoboth last spring, but Mr. Samuel Peck preached violently against him on June 2, which caused great uneasiness, and in about a month his treatment produced a separation, and a new society was gathered, over which Winchester was ordained on September 4, since which he has baptized thirty persons, and has two more in his church who are not baptized. He appears to be a man of good sense, and to have many just notions about religion, though in others inexperienced and rash.”

After Mr. Winchester had renounced free communion, and joined the Baptist church in Bellingham, a council was called by that church with a view to setting him apart as an evangelist. But his extravagance had now taken a new turn; he had adopted the principles of ultra-Calvinism, maintaining that ministers had no “right to call or

"Narrative" has been published, "by James Ellis, A. M., attorney-at-law." He is a son of the minister before named; and his narrative confirms what I had before written, if it is carefully examined. He says, "The inhabitants of the precinct, at a lawful meeting, called for that purpose, unanimously concurred with the church in the choice of Mr. Ellis." This was on November 10, 1784. Page 11. But he did not accept of that call, and wanted more money. Therefore at another meeting, December 27, 1784,

invite sinners, as sinners, now to come to Christ." The council therefore declined to take the proposed action.

In October, 1780, Mr. Winchester was engaged to preach to the Baptist church in Philadelphia, six months or longer. The following extract from an address of that church to sister churches in America, as quoted in Manning and Brown University, pp. 333, 334, will describe his course there.

"Popular applause, the idol which too many worship, was soon discovered to be an object zealously sought for and courted by Mr. Winchester. To accomplish this, persons were every week hastily admitted to baptism, upon the slightest examination; though we really believe that among the number are several sincere Christians, who, during this season of trial, have not been ashamed openly to discountenance his errors. Various innovations, contrary to our established discipline, were introduced through his means. The church undertook a reform. In some respects success attended us; in others an obstinate adherence marked his character.

"The principal foundation of the greatest uneasiness we shall now proceed to consider. Early in the winter it was whispered to a few, that Mr. Winchester, notwithstanding his artful endeavors to conceal the same in his public discourses, held the doctrine of a final restoration of bad men and angels from hell; that the whole of Adam's progeny, yea, the devils themselves, at certain different periods, would be delivered from their torment and made completely happy; in other words, he peremptorily denied the endless duration or perpetuity of future punishment. The method taken by him at first to propagate this wicked tenet, was by creeping into houses and leading captive persons of weak capacities, wherein he met with too much encouragement. Alarmed at this authenticated report, he was at times privately conversed with on the subject by several of the members. He did not presume to contradict it fully, and yet his confession was by no means satisfactory. Upon these occasions he would frequently intimate his intention of going away, provided the smallest division took place on his account; while at the same juncture, as opportunity served, he failed not to use arguments in order to gain proselytes."

In March, 1781, nearly one half of the church, including the older and more substantial members almost without exception, protested against the continuance of Mr. Winchester's ministry with them. An intense excitement ensued. The original church took possession of the meeting-house, which the other party attempted to wrest from them by violence. The question was tested by law, and Winchester and his party defeated.

President Manning wrote to Dr. Rippon:—"The apostasy of Mr. Winchester has been for a lamentation amongst us. Self-exaltation was the rock on which he split, though he had from the first, been remarkable for instability of character." See Manning and Brown University, p. 327. He afterwards preached widely and published largely in defence of Universalism, both in England and America. Mr. Backus replied to his arguments in a treatise entitled, "The doctrine of Universal Salvation, examined and refuted;" published in Providence in 1782.—ED.



they offered him a hundred pounds a year, and then he accepted their call ; though this sum was voted by but little more than twenty men, and nearly three hundred men were taxed to pay it. Our author says, " Every person within the precinct was taxed, and the collector ordered to gather the moneys without favor or partiality or the least discrimination." Page 63. Yet some of them belonged to Mr. Snow's church, some to Mr. Peck's, and many to Baptist churches ; and a large majority never had any concern with Mr. Ellis as their minister. Yet his son says of the party who chose his father, " Though they begun a good work, yet, being destitute of the grace of perseverance, they failed in its final completion, and brought difficulties to themselves and all concerned." Page 16. But can any man believe that it was a good work, for the minority to essay to force the majority to support a minister whom they never chose ; or that grace was ever given to enable any to persevere in such a way ? As these people found that they could not do it, and called back the bills from the collectors in the spring of 1790, Mr. Ellis sued the whole precinct for his salary in the fall after, but the action was continued to March. And as the leaders of the precinct were not willing always to lie under this yoke, they called a meeting, February 7, 1791, when it was voted, " That the precinct do not agree that the Rev. John Ellis shall officiate as minister in said precinct at the expense of said precinct." And his son says, " Thus they flattered themselves they had discharged their minister, and boasted much of their novel and short method of dismissal." Page 23. Though the whole community of the Massachusetts had dismissed their Governor nearly four years before, and all America have still the right to leave their highest rulers out of office at appointed times. But God says of Mystery Babylon, The woman which thou sawest, is the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. Rev. xvii. 5, 18. And how evident is it, that the ministers who are supported by law in our country belong to that great city ? For the most of them were very active in procuring the revolt of America from the government of Great Britain, while they have never allowed the people here the same liberty concerning their religious teachers, as they have concerning their governors and legislators. And how can our legislature give ministers a power that they never had themselves ? Can men be any longer blinded about these affairs ? If Mr. Ellis would have given up his claim upon that precinct for the future, his past salary would have been paid, and all the trouble of shutting him out of their meeting-house, and the expense of courts upon these matters, would have been prevented. But in October, 1794, their fund of money, as well as a salary for seven years, was given to Ellis's party by our supreme judicial court, with vast costs of courts against his opponents. His son says, " A very full and candid hearing (continuing for two days and a half) was given both by judges and jurors. All records, from the first settling of the town of Rehoboth, were brought

into view, the facts fully stated, and the law candidly considered." Page 49. And he says, "Respecting the fund, it appears by the records, that in the year of our Lord, 1640, the old colony of Plymouth granted to the people of Rehoboth certain lands for the purpose of supporting public teachers of the gospel." Page 55. Very true; and for seventeen years after, all the arts of ministers, and of other colonies, could not bring Plymouth legislature to interfere with the law of Christ, who says, They which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel. I Cor. ix. 14. But in 1658, Governor Bradford, and other fathers of the colony, being dead, their children yielded to the other colonies, in introducing the use of the sword to support religious ministers. And four Quakers were hanged directly after at Boston, whose blood hath brought a lasting reproach upon New England; though it has been ignorance or wickedness, in all men who have not exempted Plymouth colony from that reproach. And how could lands which were given to support preachers of the gospel, be taken away to support men who will not trust the Lord Jesus Christ and his influence for their temporal living? For though Abraham was an eminent servant of God, yet his children were a generation of vipers when Christ came in the flesh. Matt. iii. 7. And God says of such, They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web; he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper. Is. lix. 5. And how is this word now verified in this and other countries? For justice can often be had in civil causes, while it is denied in religious affairs. In the year 1760, they sold six hundred and seventy-four acres of ministerial land in Rehoboth for more than four thousand dollars; but half of that money, which belonged to the first parish, with seven hundred pounds more for Ellis's salary, with great costs of court, has been taken from the majority of the inhabitants, and given to a small party therein. And because two men placed themselves upon the stairs of the pulpit, to prevent Mr. Ellis from crowding into it, on the day when the first Baptist minister preached therein, his son says, "They were adjudged guilty of a breach of the peace, and sentenced to pay costs of prosecution, amounting to ninety-five pounds, fifteen shillings and eleven pence; a high price for a seat upon the stairs in a decayed meeting-house." Page 32. Yes; and if a Baptist justice of the peace had not bound Mr. Ellis to his good behavior until the next March, we have no reason to think that Baptist ministers could peaceably have preached in said house all that time.<sup>1</sup> And his son now says of them, "This conduct has unwillingly obliged many, even of the charitable, to fear that they were not men of piety, or common honesty." Page 68. Which gives a plain view of what many call piety and charity in our days.

But the people who invited Baptist ministers to preach there, soon ob-

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 354, 355.—Ed.

served that they preached another kind of doctrine, as well as in another manner from that of their former ministers; and a visible change was wrought in many thereby, and the Baptists who used to go to other meetings gathered to this. Also since Mr. Peck's death, his church is dissolved, and many of his society have come here. A number of souls were hopefully converted, and old believers were quickened, and they sent for ministers to baptize them at sundry times, until these, with some who were members of Baptist churches before, having called in advice, formed a Baptist church there, November 27, 1794. And Mr. John Pierce Jones, of Providence, having preached to them through the winter, was ordained their pastor, March 18, 1795. They have since built themselves a convenient meeting-house, in sight of that which was taken from them, at the distance of more than a quarter of a mile. Their worship therein is to be governed by the church, and harmony appears among them. And the majority of the inhabitants of the towns of Rehoboth, Taunton, and some other towns, are now exempted from the taxing power of the Congregational denomination. And it is hoped that this freedom will prevail through the country, so that all men who are willing to obey the laws of Christ may no longer be oppressed by any who do not love him above all the things of time.

The Baptist church of Taunton was first gathered in Norton. Mr. William Carpenter was ordained the pastor of a Separate church there, September 7, 1748. He was born in Rehoboth in 1710, and his labors in this church were successful, until he and the majority of the church, became Baptists, and he was installed in that order, April 1, 1761. Some of the members of that church, especially they who lived in Easton, had run into the most delusive notions that could be conceived of; even so as to forsake their lawful wives and husbands, and to take others; and they got so far as to declare themselves to be perfect and immortal, or that the resurrection was past already, as some did in the apostolic age. II Tim. ii. 18.<sup>1</sup> But Elder Carpenter, and a majority of the church, rejected those abominations, and he continued faithful unto his death, which happened August 23, 1768. The most of his church then lived in the east part of Norton, towards Taunton, where a Baptist meeting had been long kept. Mr. Jeremiah Basset lived there, who was a member of Elder Round's church in Rehoboth, and obtained liberty from thence to hold worship on the Lord's days at his house, as early as 1774; and he improved his gifts there, and their society increased, until they built a good meeting-house, upon the great road from Taunton to Boston, in 1767, and in April, 1769, the Baptist church of Norton united with the society in Taunton, and have held their worship in that house ever since. Their second pastor was William Nelson,<sup>2</sup> A. M., who was born in Middleborough, July 18, 1741, bap-

<sup>1</sup>Shadrach Ireland, hereafter mentioned, was connected with them.—B.

See p. 111—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Son-in-law of Mr. Backus.—Ed.



tized in June, 1761, educated in Rhode Island College, and ordained the pastor of this church, November 12, 1772. A great harvest of souls was granted among that people in 1780, which increased their church to near eighty members. But as Mr. Nelson was not of a strong constitution, a sudden cold, after preaching at a funeral, seized his lungs in such a manner, that he was not able to preach for some years; and he removed down to the sea in Dartmouth, in 1786, where he has recovered his strength so far as to be able to preach occasionally. His brother Ebenezer Nelson, was ordained a colleague with him, November 10, 1790.

A Separate church was formed in Attleborough, and Mr. Nathaniel Shepard was ordained their pastor, January 20, 1748; and he was well esteemed until his death, April 4, 1752.<sup>1</sup> Afterwards the Baptist principles gradually prevailed among them, until they constituted a Baptist church there in 1769, and Mr. Job Seamans was ordained their pastor, December 15, 1773. He was born in Swansea, May 13, 1748, and went to Nova Scotia with Elder Nathan Mason in 1763, and was converted and began to preach there. But upon a visit to his native place, he went and preached in Attleborough, which was so agreeable to this church, that they prevailed with him to remove and become their pastor; and a great blessing was granted on his labors in the winter before the American war; and a greater in the glorious year 1780, which increased his church to eighty-one members. Mr. Seamans was also very successful in laboring in many other places. But his people grew very slack about his support, and the insurrection in 1786 produced unhappy effects in his society, so that he asked a dismissal from them, which the church granted in November, 1787, though with reluctance; and he removed the next summer and settled at New London, in New Hampshire, where (in its place) we shall have a good account of him. This church in Attleborough sought for other helps, and Mr. Abner Lewis removed there in 1789, and ministered to them until 1794, when he removed back to Freetown; and though they have had other preachers since, yet they have no settled pastor. Their meeting-house is upon the great road to Providence, thirty-two miles from Boston. Six miles south of them is the Second Baptist church in Attleborough. A Separate church was formed there, and Mr. Elihu Daggett was ordained their pastor, July 3, 1765. He was born in that town, August 6, 1710; and he was beloved by his people, until he was taken away by death, August 29, 1769. He was baptized, and so were a number of his church, which increased to forty-three members; but a part of them were only sprinkled in infancy. Mr. Elisha Carpenter was ordained their pastor, June 17, 1778. He also was born in Attleborough, August 17,

<sup>1</sup>An "Account of the Experiences and Dying Testimony of Mr. Nathaniel Shepherd," written by Mr. Backus, was published as an appendix to his treatise on "An Internal Call to Preach the Gospel."—Ed.

1745, and was a Baptist before the church came into the Baptist order in 1781, in which they now appear to be well established.<sup>1</sup>

The town of Dighton lies north from Swansea, and east from Rehoboth, and a powerful work began in those towns in the fall of 1771, and a large number were baptized there soon after. Mr. Enoch Goff was one of them, who was born in Dighton, November 3, 1740, converted in 1765, baptized in 1771, and began to preach the next summer. And as his preaching was powerful upon many, a Baptist church was formed in the west part of Dighton, and he was ordained their pastor, December 2, 1772. And though his advantages as to human learning were not great, yet spiritual teaching has made him a very useful and acceptable minister, at home and abroad; and his church and congregation have become very large. Mr. David Seamans was raised up in this church, and was ordained a colleague with Mr. Goff, January 4, 1781, who was a useful minister at Freetown afterwards. Mr. Isaac Case was also raised up in this church, and labored to good purpose in various parts of the land, until he went into the District of Maine, where we shall hear more of him hereafter.

Freetown, which is on the east side of the river, against Dighton and Swansea, was so abusively treated by a Presbyterian minister above seventy years ago,<sup>2</sup> that a number of the people turned to the Quakers, and many others disregarded any religious worship for a long time after. But it pleased God to pour out his Spirit upon the east part of the town in 1773, when many were hopefully converted, and joined the Second Baptist church in Middleborough. The next year they obtained preaching among themselves, and they built them a house for worship, and formed a church there, September 13, 1775, being regularly dismissed from the church they had joined in Middleborough, and Mr. Abner Lewis was ordained their pastor, June 26, 1776. He was born in Middleborough, March 16, 1745, joined the First Baptist church there in 1765, began to preach in 1770, and had preached in Freetown two years before he was ordained; and such a blessing was granted among them afterwards as increased their church to a hundred and twenty-eight members in 1780. But the public difficulties in the country, with the unhappy temper of some of the members of the church, caused Mr. Lewis to ask a dismission from them, which he obtained in August, 1784; and he has travelled and labored in various places since, and has supplied the church in Harwich for more than a year past. The behavior of some in this church has caused a number to

<sup>1</sup>The history of this church presents the rare example of excessive tendency to rigorous discipline. The pastor was excluded and the ruling elder deposed, both, it would seem, on very slight grounds. Two members were excluded for not saying "Amen" at the close of the preacher's prayer. The church was speedily rent with dissension, and, early in the present century, it disappears.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 500.—ED.

ask and receive dismissals from it to other churches, while some have died, and others removed away, until they have become very small. The west part of Freetown enjoyed but little of the blessings which were granted round them, until the glorious year 1780, when a happy revival took place there, and a Baptist church was formed in 1781, and Mr. David Seamans was installed their pastor, August 13, 1783. He was a good preacher, and an exemplary walker. He was drowned, by falling out of a canoe in the night, June 7, 1786, as he was returning from visiting one of the sick of his flock. After this mournful providence, they obtained occasional supplies, from time to time, until Mr. Philip Hathaway was installed their pastor, June 13, 1792. He had been ordained in Middleborough, September 30, 1790. They have built a good house for public worship since he was settled, and things appear to be encouraging among them.

New Bedford was once the east part of Dartmouth, and a Baptist church was formed there, October 7, 1774; and Mr. Zaccheus Tobey preached to them for many years, until he was ordained there in 1792. The first minister in Dartmouth was a Baptist, but the Quakers have been a great majority in the town for many years, until they censured and excluded one of their chief ministers, in 1778, for appearing openly in favor of the Americans, while at war with Great Britain. This caused a division in their society, and gave their children liberty to go to hear the preaching of other ministers, which was denied them before, notwithstanding their great name for liberty of conscience. Baptist ministers from Rehoboth and Swansea frequently preached in Tiverton and Dartmouth, and such a blessing was granted upon their labors in 1780, that many went and joined those churches, until a Baptist church was formed in Dartmouth, June 2, 1781, and Mr. Daniel Hicks was installed their pastor, the 10th of October following. He is a son of Elder John Hicks, of Rehoboth, where he was born, November 30, 1755, and was ordained there, July 12, 1780. Another revival was granted in Dartmouth in 1784, which added thirty members to this church by the close of the next year. In 1787, a great blessing was given upon the north part of New Bedford, and a meeting was set up there, and many were baptized among them, who chose to join as a branch of Dartmouth church. Mr. Tucker Tabor was raised up to preach there, who, with a number of his brethren, afterwards removed into the State of New York, though others have continued this meeting ever since. A revival of religion in Dartmouth, in 1788, caused the addition of about forty members to the original church. A cold and trying time followed for several years, but a fresh revival began in January, 1794, which spread in Dartmouth, Freetown, New Bedford, and Rochester; and Mr. John Lawrence was ordained a colleague with Elder Hicks, the 23d of October following. He was born in Freetown, August 30, 1761, and he preaches chiefly in



the east part of that town. A Baptist meeting-house was built in the west part of Rochester in 1793, and such a blessing was now granted there that about forty persons were baptized, who also joined as a branch of Dartmouth church; and their addition in this revival in all their branches was a hundred and fifty members.

The Baptist church in Raynham sprang from the great revival of religion which began in these parts in 1779, and it was formed in the year 1780, and increased to above fifty members the next year. But some of them were drawn away with corrupt principles, and others removed into distant parts of the country, so that their number is now small, though these few appear to be steadfast in the faith.

The first Baptist church in the county of Barnstable is in Harwich. The ministers of that county generally opposed the great work which was in our land, in and after 1741; but Mr. Elisha Paine, who was born in Eastham, went and preached there, and also at Harwich, in 1744, with great success. A separation from the opposing ministers was the consequence; and Mr. Joshua Nickerson was ordained the pastor of a Separate church there, February 23, 1749. Some of them were fined for separating, and distress was made upon many for ministerial taxes; but this served to increase their number, until another church was formed in the west part of the town, and Mr. Richard Chase was ordained their pastor, December 11, 1751. These churches held to free communion with all Christians, whether they were sprinkled in infancy, or baptized by immersion; but as Mr. Chase was thus baptized in 1753, believers' baptism prevailed among them so much, that many gave up mixed communion, and a Baptist church was formed there, and Mr. Chase was installed their pastor, September 29, 1757.<sup>1</sup> And their principles prevailed so much, that Mr. Nickerson left his people, and went and settled at Tamworth, in New Hampshire. Mr. Chase ministered to his church for twenty years, and then the lust of intemperance had prevailed so upon him, that he was deposed from his office, by the advice of a council, in January, 1777, and he remained out of fellowship until he died in January, 1794, above eighty years old. And though his fall into sin was very shocking to many, yet the faithfulness of the Baptists in deposing him raised the credit of their profession; and a fresh revival of religion among them caused their principles to prevail, so that the south parish in Harwich received a Baptist minister to preach in their meeting-house, and a Baptist church was gathered there, and a minister ordained in 1781. But they were not in fellowship with the other church, and their minister proved himself to be a deceitful man, and finally went away and left them, and their church was dissolved. And in No-

<sup>1</sup>This church is now the Baptist church in West Harwich. Mr. Backus baptized Mr. Chase when they were both Separatists. He also preached Mr. Chase's Installation Sermon, his text being Mal. ii. 6.—Ed.

vember, 1792, a minor part of the inhabitants of that parish settled a Congregational minister there, and about two years after, they taxed all the Baptists to him, and in January, 1795, they appeared fierce for collecting it, though advice from a distance restrained them therefrom. A happy revival of religion was again granted among the Baptists in Harwich in the spring of 1793, which might occasion this fresh attempt of their adversaries to hold them in bondage as Pharaoh did. And in December, 1795, they set out in a cruel manner to collect said tax, and hauled a number to jail, and seized the estates of others without mercy.

A few people in Barnstable withdrew from their parish worship, and set up a meeting by themselves in 1748; but they were fined therefor, and two women were set in the stocks for not paying it. Yet their cause prevailed, and a church was formed there, and Mr. Nathanael Ewer was ordained their pastor, May 10, 1750, and he continued with them for more than ten years, and then went and settled at Newmarket, in New Hampshire; and the Baptist principles gained ground in Barnstable, until they formed a church there, June 20, 1771; and it increased gradually for ten years, in which time the most of them were exempted from taxes to Congregational ministers, as they had given in certificates to that party. But as a powerful work began among them in 1781, and a minister was raised up to preach among them, and he was ordained their pastor, December 4, 1788, the ruling party resolved to try what they could do towards holding them in bondage, as we have before related.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Enoch Eldridge, who is their pastor, was born in Harwich, and he has preached a part of his time to the Baptist church in Harwich, ever since he began in the work of the ministry, until 1794. A fresh revival of religion was granted in those two churches in the beginning of 1793, and Mr. Shubael Lovel, a young physician, was converted in Barnstable in March, and he began to preach

<sup>1</sup>“ Timothy Phinney, a church member, collector of taxes for Mr. Mellen, minister of the first parish in Barnstable, took away two young cattle from Ichabod and Lemuel Lombard, worth about twelve dollars, and sold them for two pounds, fourteen shillings. The man who bought the cattle returned them to the original owners upon their paying said taxes and costs, which were about two pounds, two shillings.

“ Mr. Enoch Eldridge has preached to that church ever since April, 1785; and he and Mr. Lombard judge that in that time they have taken from that society in taxes, not less than a hundred and fifty dollars. Samuel Scudder, of the Baptist society there, was taken and imprisoned for a tax. After he was confined in prison he paid it and came out; and he paid his two next taxes to Phinney. David Hallet of said church was, on January 5, 1791, called upon by Phinney to pay two taxes to Mr. Mellen, and rather than go to jail he paid them. The Baptist church in Barnstable were generally exempted from taxes until they got a minister ordained, December 4, 1788; since which, by parish vote, they have taxed all the brethren of the church [who live] in the first parish in Barnstable, but afterwards released two poor men.” Backus's Manuscripts. See pp. 351, 352.—Ed.

there in January, 1794, and he was ordained as an itinerant minister, April 29, 1795. Baptist meetings have been held for some years in Sandwich, Welfleet, and Provincetown, in that county, though Baptist churches have not yet been formed among them.

Duke's county includes Martha's Vineyard and some adjacent islands, on which are the largest number of Indians that remain any where in this part of America. Peter Folger was a schoolmaster among them, when Mr. Mayhew sailed for England in 1657, and he became a Baptist, and joined Mr. Clarke's church in Newport about 1675; and he promoted the Baptist principles among the Indians, who formed a Baptist church among them about 1694, which continues to this day; though Silas Paul, their last pastor, died August 24, 1787. Mr. Folger removed to Nantucket, and was much esteemed among the early planters there; and a daughter of his was mother to the late famous Dr. Benjamin Franklin.<sup>1</sup> Baptist ministers had preached among the English on the Vineyard at times ever since 1753; and after some were remarkably turned from darkness to light, without preaching, in the spring of 1780, they called over several Baptist ministers to preach and baptize there, until a church of fifty members was constituted there the 20th of December following.<sup>2</sup> Major Peter Norton, the

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 346, 347. Massachusetts Historical Collections, Vol. III, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 269.—B.

Mr. Backus first visited Martha's Vineyard in March, 1753. He remained two weeks, preaching in different parts of the island. His next visit was occasioned by his receiving a copy of the following letter:—

“To the Rev. Messrs. E. Hinds, I. Backus, and others, whose business it is to send forth laborers, under Christ, into his vineyard, We, inhabiting at and near Holmes's Hole, on the island of Martha's Vineyard, humbly pray you to take our case, as to a preached gospel, into your serious consideration. We, living five, six, and some of us seven or eight miles from the places of public worship, and most of us, consisting of sixty or more families, seem to be solicitous for the attendance on the First-day Baptist preachers, and if any church is ever gathered here, we think it will be of that sect. The Rev. Mr. Lewis, who has preached here several times, and has refreshed us very much, can inform you more particularly in this affair; and whom we greatly value. Now we hope that some one or other of you will visit and preach to us, and endeavor to gather a church here, as soon as possible. In the mean time, we are your poor, destitute servants.

“ELISHA WEST, [and thirteen others.]

“Tisbury, May 7, 1772.”

Mr. Backus reached the island August 14, and labored there till August 25, and much interest attended his preaching. Concerning his visit there in 1780, Mr. Backus writes in his Diary as follows:—

“Wednesday, December 20. We had a pleasant passage over to Martha's Vineyard, and I preached in the evening at Jonathan Manter's, where Elder Lewis and brother Samuel Parker met us. A glorious work of God has lately taken place here, which began in the following manner, viz.:—David Butler, his cousin, Rebecca Butler, and Abigail Pease, on the east side of Holmes's Hole, and Ebenezer



high sheriff of the county, was a father in that church, and it increased to about eighty members. But the late plundering of vessels by the British ships has caused a large part of that society to remove to the new lands up Kennebeck River.

Daggett's wife, on the west side, were brought under soul concern a year ago, the latter by the loss of a son, another by means of a transient preacher; and after great distress of soul they were converted in April and May; and they were instrumental in awakening many others. And the last of June, D. Butler came over and was baptized by Elder Lewis, who went to the island in July, and baptized Peter Norton, Esq., high sheriff of the county, and seven more. He went over again in August, and a third time in October. Elder Hunt went there in November; and such a blessing was granted upon their labors that they sent a request to each of us to come over at this time to assist in forming a church among them; therefore,

"Thursday, December 21, we met at Thomas Butler's, in Edgartown. I preached from Isa. 61. 4, and a copy of our articles of faith and covenant was considered of, and the nature of such transactions explained; after which sixteen men and thirty-four women freely and solemnly signed covenant together, to whom two men and four women were joined the 24th, who had all been baptized before."—ED.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN HAVERHILL.—ROWLEY, DANVERS AND AMESBURY.—CHELMSFORD.—NEWTON. — CAMBRIDGE, WOBURN AND WESTON. — LEICESTER. — STURBRIDGE. — CHARLTON. — SUTTON AND NORTHBRIDGE.—PETERSHAM AND HARDWICK.—ROYALSTONE.—DELUSIONS AT HARVARD.—AND A BAPTIST CHURCH.—ASHBURNHAM.—TEMPLETON.—GRAFTON, UPTON, DOUGLASS, DUDLEY, AND OTHERS.

Before the revival of religion which took place in 1764, there was no Baptist church in any part of our country northward of Boston, except one that is since dissolved. The ministers on both sides of Merrimack River were combined together against the former reformation in our land; and though a few people in Haverhill were subjects of that work, and set up a meeting in separation from those ministers, yet it did not continue long. But a minister of the west parish in Haverhill offended his people so much, as to cause controversies in councils, and in publications to the world, which were followed with a forcible shutting of him out of their meeting-house, and then a dismission from his office there. And the people saw so much partiality in other ministers towards him, that they would not be directed by them in calling another minister; therefore they had been destitute for some years, before Mr. Hezekiah Smith came and preached there in 1764, and then gathered a church in the heart of the town in May, 1765, as is related in this volume, pages 137, 138, 141—146. Their church increased to a hundred and fifty members before the war; and when that broke out, Mr. Smith engaged very heartily in the cause of his country, and was a chaplain in our army through the most distressing part of the war, only he was at home with his people in the winters. A fresh revival of religion began among them in 1778; which caused the addition of fifty-four members in three years; since which, many have been dismissed to other churches, and others have been added to this. Mr. Edmund Pilsbury, pastor of the church in Northwood, was a member of this church. Asa Messer, A. M., a member of this society, was educated in the college at



Providence, in which he is an esteemed tutor, as well as a preacher of the everlasting gospel.

A branch of Haverhill church was at the west part of Rowley, where a meeting was held for several years, until a Baptist church was formed there in 1785, and Mr. William Ewing became their minister. He was born in Scotland in 1728, and after he came to America and became a Baptist, he preached in various parts of the country, till he was ordained an itinerant preacher at Sturbridge, September 27, 1768. Afterwards he labored a while at South Brimfield, and then at Halifax in Vermont, from whence he removed to Shutesbury, before he came to Rowley, where he had some success; but in about four years, this church dismissed him from them, and he removed to Weston, and now preaches but little anywhere. In 1789 this church called Elder Abishai Crossman, from Chelmsford, and in three years their church increased from forty-four to ninety-nine members. Yet in 1793 he was dismissed, and removed into New Hampshire, and this church is at present destitute of a pastor. A number of people from Danvers had joined the church in Rowley; but they were dismissed and formed a Baptist church in Danvers, July 16, 1793, and Mr. Thomas Green removed from Cambridge, and became their minister, of whom more will be said when we come to Cambridge church. A Baptist meeting has been held for many years at Amesbury, in Essex county, and Mr. Moses Chace is their minister; but they have considered themselves as a branch of the Baptist church at Brentwood in New Hampshire.

The first Baptist church in the county of Middlesex was formed at Chelmsford, in October, 1771, and Mr. Elisha Rich was ordained their pastor, October 5, 1774. He had preached to them for a year and a half before, and he labored among them until the beginning of 1778; but then some of the members appeared to be so much against him, that he requested and obtained a dismission, and removed into Vermont, and he is now a pastor of a church there in the town of Pittsford. Mr. Samuel Fletcher removed to Chelmsford directly after, and preached there for some years, and then went and settled at Salem, in New Hampshire, where he was pastor of a Baptist church until his death last March. Mr. Abishai Crossman, of Northbridge, was called to Chelmsford, and was ordained the pastor of this church, September 24, 1783, and in four years it increased from eighty-seven to a hundred and thirteen members; yet he was dismissed and went to Rowley in 1789, as before related. Mr. John Peckens, who was born in Middleborough, and ordained in Vermont, removed to Chelmsford and became their minister in 1792.

The Baptist church in Newton sprang partly from members who formerly joined the Second Baptist church in Boston, and partly from the Separate churches of Brookline and Newton. A Separate church was formed in Brookline, and Mr. Jonathan Hide was ordained their pastor,

January 17, 1751 ; and he ministered to them until a Baptist church was formed in Newton, with which he met in his old age. A Separate church was also formed in Newton, and Mr. Nathan Ward was ordained their pastor, January 17, 1753. But different sentiments about the support of the ministry, and about the improvement of gifts in the church, caused them to call a council, in April, 1758, after which Mr. Ward was dismissed, and he has been a minister in the town of Plymouth, in New Hampshire, for thirty years past. Some of the old brethren died, and others removed into distant parts of our country, and things were in a broken posture in Newton for many years. But a shower of heavenly blessings was granted there, and a Baptist church was formed by them, July 5, 1780, which increased to seventy members in fourteen months. And Mr. Caleb Blood, who was born in Charlton, August 18, 1754, and ordained at Marlow in October, 1777, was settled as their pastor in 1781, and his ministry appeared to be very useful among them for near seven years. But then the times became so difficult, that the society thought they could not support him and his family ; and he had an earnest call to Shaftsbury, in the State of Vermont, therefore he was dismissed to Shaftsbury, where he is still useful. But a fresh revival was granted at Newton, and Mr. Joseph Grafton was called to preach there, and he was ordained their pastor, June 18, 1788. He was born in Newport, June 9, 1757, and had preached in various places, for several years, before he came to Newton, where a fresh revival was granted in 1794. He has published a piece upon baptism, and a funeral sermon.

There was a Baptist church in Cambridge in 1751, and they had a minister who was educated at New Haven College ; but he was drawn away by a parish minister in Cambridge, and left his church, and others of them fell in with Shadrach Ireland, so that this church was dissolved. Yet there were a few names in Cambridge who had not defiled their garments ; and in the glorious year 1780 a number more were converted, and a new Baptist church was formed there in 1781, and Mr. Thomas Green was ordained their pastor, November 26, 1783. He is grandson to the first Baptist minister of Leicester, and was born at Worcester, January 3, 1761 ; and this church increased under his ministry to fifty-six members. Their house for worship is near the borders of Lexington and Woburn, and members of this society in each of these towns were forced to pay taxes to Congregational ministers, until they had sued the money out of the hands of their oppressors, first in Cambridge, then in Lexington, and lastly in Woburn ; and the Baptists never recovered half so much money in either of these towns, as had been unjustly taken from them ; and as soon as the Congregational party found that they could not hold the money, they collected no more taxes for any ministers from the Baptists. And not long after their last cases in court were decided in favor of the Baptists, their minister left

them, in April, 1793, and removed to Danvers, as was before mentioned. Yet such a revival was granted among them soon after, especially in Woburn, as caused the addition of thirty-seven members to this church in two years, and a new meeting-house was built in Woburn. Mr. John Peak labored among them more than a year, and Mr. Lovel succeeded him last fall. And in 1795 the first parish in Cambridge procured an act of our legislature, to empower them to sell some ministerial lands in the town, and to secure all the moneys obtained thereby, for the support of Congregational ministers in that parish. A Baptist church was formed in Weston, July 14, 1789, in which were nineteen members the next year; but they have not increased since. A Baptist meeting has been upheld for many years in Framingham, where no church is yet formed.<sup>1</sup>

The Baptist church at Leicester, in the county of Worcester, was constituted September 28, 1738, under the charge of Elder Thomas Green, who was ordained a year before, a colleague with Elder Marsh, of Sutton; but they now became two churches by mutual consent. Elder Green went from Malden, and was an early planter at Leicester, and became a very useful physician, and acquired such an estate, that he was the main support of his society in temporals as well as spirituals all his days. He travelled much in the country as a physician, and preached frequently, and baptized many, until he was called away by death, August 20, 1773, aged seventy-three. Benjamin Foster, D. D., who was educated at Yale College, was ordained his successor, October 23, 1776, and the church increased under his ministry, from thirty to seventy-six members, in five years. But as he inclined to devote himself entirely to study, and to the ministry of the word, the people, who had not been used to support their minister, neglected him so much, that he requested a dismission from that church, which they at length granted, though reluctantly, in 1782, and he went and preached at Danvers, his native place, above two years. And in January, 1785, he was called to the first church in Newport, where he labored with success for more than two years, and then went to New York, and is now the pastor of the First Baptist church in that city. Mr. Isaac Beals was the next pastor of the Baptist church in Leicester, where he was ordained December 1, 1784, and they prospered under his ministry for two years; but then an insurrection took place in that part of the country,<sup>2</sup> which greatly affected that church and society, and after many endeavors to settle matters among them, without so good an effect as to unite them all again, he was dismissed in 1789, and went and settled at Clarendon, in Vermont, where he is now a useful minister. Mr. Nathan Dana, from Newton, was soon after called to preach at Leicester; and he was ordained at Newton as an itinerant minister, November 20, 1793, and now ministers to this people.

<sup>1</sup>See p. 98. note.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 330.—ED.



A Separate church was formed in Sturbridge, and Mr. John Blunt was ordained their pastor, September 28, 1748; and they became numerous, before the Baptist principles were embraced among them in June, 1749, and before the end of that year above sixty members, including all the officers of the church, were baptized. Some account of their sufferings was given in pages 94—96. But some Separate ministers in Connecticut made such terrible representations of its being a wicked thing for any to be rebaptized, that Mr. Blunt retracted his being dipped,<sup>1</sup> and he left his people, and went into our army, where he was slain near Lake George, September 8, 1755. And though the main body of the church persevered in their profession, yet they passed through many trying scenes, and did not obtain a settled minister for many years. Mr. William Ewing preached there for some time, and was ordained there, September 27, 1768, as an itinerant minister; and he went from thence to South Brimfield, and since to other places, as was before observed. Mr. Jordan Dodge, from Canterbury, was called to preach at Sturbridge, and he was ordained their pastor, October 27, 1784, and they prospered under his ministry for several years; but in the close of 1788, such difficulties arose that he asked and obtained a dismission, and went and settled in the State of New York, where he was found to be a deceitful man, and was rejected by the Baptist churches in those parts. However, the school of afflictions which this church has been in, with the spiritual teachings that have been granted to them, has brought them to considerable fruitfulness in Christian knowledge and conduct, in which it is hoped they will grow and increase unto the end. A fresh revival was lately granted among them under the preaching of brother Zenas L. Leonard, who is likely to become their pastor.

The Baptist church in Charlton, was first formed in Spencer, in 1762,<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Nathanael Green was ordained their pastor, October 12, 1763. Their meeting was afterwards held in the west part of Leicester, until it was removed into Charlton in 1773, where it continues. And though it was a low time with them for several years, yet a glorious work began among them in 1779, which caused the addition of a hundred and nine members in three years. The wonders of divine grace in this land at that time when the war raged on every hand, and had greatly corrupted the morals of the people, and public credit was fallen to the ground, was evidently a great cause of saving America from destruction. This work was then powerful in Virginia, as well as in other parts of our lands. Elder

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Backus, led by his own experience to sympathize with Mr. Blunt in his difficulties, paid him a visit. He says that Mr. Blunt was led to return to his former practise, not "by seeing any Scripture light for infant baptism;" but by the apparent effects of the Baptist movement, "some running into errors, and making a discussion among the saints, and the like."—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>July thirteenth.—Ed.

Green was continued a faithful pastor and an exemplary walker, until he fell asleep in Jesus, March 21, 1791, in the seventieth year of his age.<sup>1</sup> And the church soon after called Mr. David Rathbun to preach to them, and he was ordained their pastor, September 25, 1793. He was born in Stonington, May 29, 1763, and his father, uncle, and one of his brothers, are all now pastors of Baptist churches.

A Baptist church was constituted in Sutton, September 16, 1735, and Mr. Benjamin Marsh was ordained their pastor, September 28, 1737, colleague with Mr. Green. Mr. Marsh was esteemed a godly man, of an exemplary life, though not of large gifts, until his death, January 4, 1775, aged ninety. But the church was then small, and it is since dissolved. There had been a great revival of religion in the Congregational society in Sutton, in the year 1741, and a Separate church was formed among them, and Mr. Ezekiel Cole was ordained their pastor, January 31, 1751. But they were broken and scattered afterwards, and a Baptist church was gathered there, April 27, 1765, and Mr. Jeremiah Barstow was installed their pastor, May 26, 1768. But a difference in sentiment about the doctrines of grace caused his dismissal from them, by the advice of a council,<sup>2</sup> Oc-

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Green was arrested for ministers' rates, and taken to Worcester to be imprisoned. By the advice of Colonel Chandler, who is mentioned on page 65, "he paid the fine and was released, after having been in custody six hours. The constable gave him the following receipt.

"Leicester, February 13, 1769.

This day I made distraint upon Mr. Nathanael Green's body, of Leicester, for his rate which he was rated in the year 1767, and received of said Nathanael Green, seventeen shillings, nine pence, one farthing, so much being in full for his province rate; and also of said Nathanael Green, three shillings, nine pence, one farthing, being in full for his town and county rates for the year 1767: I say, received by me,

BENJAMIN BOND, Constable for the year 1767.'

"Mr. Green brought an action against the assessors for damages. The inferior court gave judgment in his favor, and allowed him forty shillings and costs of suit. The assessors appealed to the superior court, and the case was again decided in Green's favor. He was allowed all the money he had expended in the law and lawful costs." Rev. S. Hall's Collection of papers.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>A part of the church refused to concur with the council, and to them Mr. Barstow preached for a time, supporting himself by teaching school. A second council recognized them as the original church, and him as their pastor.

"In 1748, Mr. Barstow was imprisoned in Worcester jail for speaking to a clergyman in the pulpit, and for exhorting the people after he was turned out of the meeting-house. This offence was committed in Thompson. He was confined one month and was then dismissed by the court. The crime alleged was, asking the minister for liberty to tell his experience; but the king's attorney said he had broken no law.

"He, with others, was seized by a constable, February 12, 1750, and was confined ten or twelve days in Worcester jail, when his father paid the rate and took him out.

"Mr. Barstow attended a Congregational ordination in Brookfield, and after the

tober 1, 1772; and he removed to Thompson, in Connecticut, and never took the charge of any other church, though he preached occasionally, until he died suddenly, by a fall from his horse, June 4, 1795. Mr. Elisha Ransom preached to this church for some years, and was ordained there as an itinerant, November 11, 1778; but he went the next year to Woodstock, in Vermont. This church in Sutton remained without a pastor, until such a division arose therein, that they were left out of the Warren Association in 1786. But the majority of them obtained a comfortable settlement again, and Mr. Ebenezer Lamson removed there from Ashford, and was their minister from 1788, until April, 1794, when they discovered that he had fallen into the opinion of universal salvation, and rejected him. The other part of this church embraced the opinion of mixed communion, and at length joined the Grotton Conference; but both churches were favored with a happy revival of religion in 1792, and are now in comfortable circumstances. Two of the brethren of the first church in Sutton, Samuel Waters and Samuel King, have been called to improve their gifts in preaching the gospel, though they are not ordained. Mr. William Batcheller, a member of the church in Northbridge, who lives in the east part of Sutton, has preached in those parts for several years, until a fresh revival was granted there, a church was formed, and he was ordained their pastor, October 10, 1792. The Baptist church in Northbridge was constituted, August 31, 1780, and Mr. John Cooper was ordained therein, October 11, 1792, when there was a happy time among them.

A Baptist church was formed in Petersham in 1768,<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Samuel Dennis preached to them for a number of years, before he was ordained their pastor in October, 1778. He was so well esteemed in the town, that he was chosen a member of our legislature in the time of the war; but worldly affairs did not turn him aside from faithfulness in the church, until he rested from his labors in April, 1783. His church persevered in their profession, though their meeting is removed into the bounds of Hardwick, where it is still continued.

Royalstone lies upon the north borders of our State, adjoining to Rich-

services were over, he, while sitting on his horse, gave notice that Mr. Blunt would preach that evening in the house of James Walker, in Brookfield, when the people fell upon him, in the presence of fourteen clergymen, with their horse whips, some whipping him with the lashes and others striking him on the head with their whips clubbed, with as much apparent good will as if they intended to take the life of this profaner of their ordination festival. It was supposed that they gave him, at least one hundred blows, as the exercise continued about half an hour. He exhorted while they whipped and attempted to drag him from his horse. No effort was made to quell the mob, though officers of the peace were present." Rev. S. Hall's Collection of papers.—ED.

<sup>1</sup>A copy of the letter of this church to the Warren Association, in 1769, in Mr. Hall's Collection of papers, gives its date, June 19, 1767.—ED.



mond, in New Hampshire. Mr. Whitman Jacobs had been pastor of the Baptist church at Thompson, in Connecticut, more than twenty years, before a part of them removed and settled in Royalstone, formed a church there, and he was installed their pastor, December 13, 1770. Their number was twenty-nine the next year; and they had a revival in 1774, and another in 1779, and their church increased to eighty-nine. But such controversies arose in their church about discipline, and about some political affairs, that their minister was dismissed in 1786, and he is now at Guilford, in Vermont. In 1789, Mr. Moses Kenny was settled as the pastor of Royalstone, and they had a large increase of members for several years after.<sup>1</sup>

Harvard is a place where the goodness of God and the folly of man have been remarkably discovered. A powerful work of grace was wrought in that town, in the time of the great revival of religion through this land; but amazing delusions appeared there afterwards. For Shadrach Ireland, of Charlestown, near Boston, after acting as a teacher for some years, professed to have experienced such a change, both in body and mind, that he was become perfect and immortal, and a number more with him, in the spring of 1753. And he set himself up as the head of the church, and assumed God's prerogatives in such a blasphemous manner, that he was in danger of being punished by authority; upon which he absconded, and his followers said he was gone out of this wicked country. But he was concealed in Harvard, where a large house was built for him, in part of which another family lived, and scarcely any men knew that he was there but his followers, who resorted to him for his blessing, from various and distant parts of the country, and brought him a plenty of provisions. Ireland forbade them to marry, or to lodge with each other, if they were married, and he had left a wife and children in Charlestown; yet he took another woman, and lodged with her in Harvard all his remaining days. And when he was suddenly seized with death, he said, "I am going, but don't bury me; for the time is short; God is coming to take the church." Therefore he was put into a large box filled up with lime, and laid in the cellar, where it continued from September, 1778, to July, 1779, when the body scented so much that it was carried out in the night and buried in a corn-field. This account I have from under the hand of one of his followers, who has since been delivered from that delusion. But in the spring of 1780, another company appeared above Albany, with a woman at their head, with great signs and lying wonders, and such uncommon motions of their bodies, that they were called *Shakers*. They removed from place to place, until they fixed their headquarters at the house where Ireland died, in August, 1781; and they carried on at so high a rate there, that a mo-

<sup>1</sup>A branch of this church was formed in Warwick, May 12, 1773.—ED.

tion was made in our legislature to have them punished by authority, which motion was negatived by the majority of a single vote, as we were well informed. But the fear of a mob caused the removal of their leaders from Harvard in 1782, and they came to Norton, and then to Rehoboth in the fall of that year. And they prevailed with many of their society to sell their estates, in order to build a ship to carry the church to the New Jerusalem, as they said. And a large vessel was built in Rehoboth; but it was sent a voyage to the West Indies, from whence a rich cargo was brought, and the vessel and cargo were sold, and a few men cheated the rest out of their estates, and their community is dissolved in these parts. Some of them remain in the county of Albany.

But a more happy scene now opens upon Harvard. A young physician was converted there, June 18, 1775, the day after the bloody battle at Charlestown; and while the war raged through the country, he was engaged in real religion, and began to preach the gospel the next winter.<sup>2</sup> He was born at Westford, November 13, 1752, and studied physic with Dr. Green, of Leicester, and then settled in Harvard. And having called Elder Rich from Chelmsford, Isaiah Parker, Stephen Gates, Tarbel Willard, William Willard, Joseph Stone, Josiah Willard and eight women were baptized, and they were formed into a church, June 27, 1776, and Dr. Parker was ordained their pastor, June 10, 1778. But two years after, they were remarkably oppressed, in a time when it might have been least expected. For the constitution of the Massachusetts government was published March 2, 1780, when the compilers of it said to the people, "Your delegates did not conceive themselves to be vested with power to set up one denomination of Christians above another; for religion must at all times be a matter between God and individuals." This they said because Protestants were not set above Papists in our legislature; but in each town, one denomination has been set up above all the rest to this day, which they then acknowledged they had no right to do. And one member of the Baptist church in Harvard was imprisoned at Worcester three months, another five, and one of their society six months, between the publication of the constitution, and its taking place in October, for taxes to a Congregational minister, who was settled in the name of the king of Great Britain. These three men kept exact accounts of all their expenses while in prison, with all that was given them there; and their accounts were examined the next year by two judicious men, who have given it from under their hands, that they expended a hundred and three dollars and a third, more than all that they received there. And no recompense has ever been made therefor by their oppressors. And can any man who believes that God governs the world, think it strange that the powers of Britain have been suffered to rob the Americans of their property, when

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 297, 298.—ED.<sup>2</sup>See p. 199.—ED.

robberies for religious ministers under British commissions have been openly approved of in our country? May we not say with Jacob, O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united! This church in Harvard was soon after attacked by the spirit of delusion, so that they said in a letter to the Warren Association, September 8, 1783:—

For twelve months we had but two persons added, and several left us, and joined the Shakers. We excommunicated eight persons in that time. A form of godliness appeared on one hand, and a false power on the other, and the church in such a low state, that we feared at times that our candlestick would be removed out of its place. We saw the enemy coming in like a flood, and that except the Spirit of the Lord should lift up a standard against him, we were a ruined people. Therefore we appointed a day of fasting and prayer, that God would pour out his Spirit among us, and work wonders under the name of his holy child Jesus; and we have reason to think that the Lord gave us a spirit of grace and supplication, and, for his own name sake, was pleased to answer us in mercy. The fast was on September 4, 1782, when there was a remarkable display of God's power and grace, in convincing sinners of their lost state, the hardness of their hearts and blindness of their minds, with their pride of life and rejecting the gospel of Jesus Christ; and then giving them to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; the free salvation of the gospel, and causing them to rejoice therein; so that forty-nine persons were baptized among us from September 22 to November 24, and fifty-eight persons have been baptized among us since the work began; and we have often sat under Christ's shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to our taste. Our present number is a hundred and ten.

They have enjoyed many blessings since.

The Baptist church in Ashburnham was constituted in February, 1779, and they have gone through scenes of prosperity and adversity; have endured oppression from others, and many trying things among themselves. In 1787, such a revival was granted among them, as increased their church in one year from thirty-seven to sixty-one members. But they have never had an ordained pastor, nor any great alterations since. Several gifted brethren among them assist in carrying on their worship, and they get help at times from other churches.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In June, 1778, Isaiah Parker, of Harvard, preached in Ashburnham, and baptized sixteen persons. For several years the members of the Baptist church in this town were taxed for the support of the Congregational minister, and the taxes collected by force. We extract the following from a sketch of their history:—

“February 26, 1781. About three weeks after the rate was made, the collectors went about from house to house amongst our brethren, seizing their effects, especially their pewter, leaving some families not a platter to use. One family had a cow taken away; another poor family their grain. Now the grain never was posted nor exposed to public sale, but was applied to the use of the robber and the minister that it was robbed for. The number that were distressed were seven. Our brethren made no resistance, but used the most striking arguments to convince our op-



The Baptist church in Templeton was formed August 21, 1782, and Mr. John Sellon was ordained their pastor, November 19, 1783. He was born in England in 1727, and lived a while at Boston after he came to America. He ministered to this church about two years, and then was dismissed; and he has preached since in various places, and is now living in Petersham. This church has had many ministers to labor with them, and a happy revival of religion has been granted there in two years past, though they have not obtained another settled pastor. The Baptists are so much esteemed in that town, that two members of their church have lately been representatives in our legislature.

A Baptist church was formed in Grafton in 1767, and they prospered for some years, and had thirty-nine members in 1780.<sup>1</sup> Above three years after, Mr. Elkanah Ingalls, of Rehoboth, went and lived there, and was their minister for about four years; and then it was discovered that he, with the majority of the church, had fallen into the opinion of universal salvation, and they were left out of the Warren Association in 1788, and he removed back to Rehoboth, and is become a common drunkard.<sup>2</sup> But a minor part of the church continued in their former faith, and set up their meeting in Upton, and Mr. Simeon Snow was ordained in their community in June, 1791.<sup>3</sup> They hold worship steadily there, though, their number being small, they have joined as a branch to Bellingham church. A Baptist church was once formed in Douglas, and Adam Streeter was ordained their pastor, November 24, 1774; but he fell into the opinion of universal

pressors of the unlawfulness of their conduct. It seemed as though our oppressors endeavored to take things that would distress us most, or, at least, such things as are most difficult to be replaced at this day, perhaps thinking that would induce us to redeem them. .... Yet they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the cause of Christ." Backus's Manuscripts.—ED.

<sup>1</sup>This church was organized with only four members, Joseph Whipple, Jacob Whipple, Ebenezer Wheeler and Robert Leathe. They were all dismissed from Elder Green's church in Leicester.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>Elkanah Ingalls is mentioned on pages 441, 442, as having assisted, irregularly, in the ordination of Elhanan Winchester. He was a member of Elder John Hicks's church, in Rehoboth. Like Winchester, he adopted open communion views, and by this and other means, gave much trouble to the church. At last a council was called which declared him guilty of breaking various gospel rules and addressed to him a severe admonition.—ED.

<sup>3</sup>According to the following memorandum, found in Rev. S. Hall's Collection of papers, a Baptist church had been formed in Upton as early as 1753.

"Property was taken from the following persons in Upton for minister's rates: In 1753, two cows from Benjamin Palmer, Jr.; in 1751, a cow, and one in 1752, and one in 1753, from Jonah Pease; in 1751 and 1752, a cow each year from William Barker. In March, 1753, Abraham Bloss, pastor of the Baptist church in Upton, was carried to jail for a tax to the minister, and was confined forty days. In 1751, Robert Weeks was imprisoned six days for the same cause."—ED.

salvation, and was deposed from his office in 1781, and the church is since dissolved, though a Baptist meeting is often held there still. Streeter preached up his new opinions in various parts of the country for several years, and is since dead. A Baptist church was formed in Dudley in 1775, and Elder Obed Warren was raised up among them, who afterwards removed into the State of New York; but as many removed away, their church is small if it is not dissolved.<sup>1</sup> Baptist meetings have been held in Brookfield, Shrewsbury, and Holden, where churches are not yet formed.

<sup>1</sup>A Baptist church was formed in Dudley as early as 1744, as appears from the town records. The church which Mr. Backus mentions was formed May 5, 1775, with eight members. Still another Baptist church was formed here in 1798, which "existed long enough to illustrate the sad consequences of dissension and then ceased to be." Discourse on the fiftieth anniversary of the Baptist church in Webster, Rev. C. W. Reding, pp. 5, 6, 7; Semi-Centennial Discourse of the Worcester Baptist Association, pp. 5, 6, 8.

A complete list of the Baptist churches in Worcester county previous to 1795, should probably include one in that part of Mendon called Mill River. This church sent a request to "the church of Christ in Middleborough" that Elder Backus and other delegates be appointed to a council to be held October 11, 1758, "publicly to devote and set apart" Samuel Hovey as pastor of "the church of Christ in Mill River." On page 79, note, it is stated that Samuel Hovey was ordained pastor of a Separate church in Mendon in 1749, and that he afterwards became a Baptist.—ED.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

AN ACCOUNT OF SOUTH BRIMFIELD.—WEST SPRINGFIELD.—ASHFIELD.—MONTAGUE AND LEVERETT.—WILBRAHAM.—NEW SALEM.—SHUTESBURY.—OTHERS IN HAMPSHIRE.—FIRST IN CHESHIRE.—SECOND AND THIRD.—PITTSFIELD.—HANCOCK.—WASHINGTON AND SANDSFIELD.—OTHER CHURCHES IN BERKSHIRE.—THE WORK ILLUSTRATED IN A PARTICULAR INSTANCE.

The first Baptist church in the county of Hampshire was formed in Brimfield, November 4, 1736, and Mr. Ebenezer Moulton was ordained their pastor, November 4, 1741. His father and a majority of the church opposed the work that was then going on in the land, while he and a minor part were alive in it; and they had much controversy about it for seven years, and then about fifteen of them told their experiences to each others' satisfaction, and signed new articles and a covenant; and Mr. Moulton took them as his church, and would not allow any others to commune with them, without coming in at this door. The majority complained of this as unreasonable, but acted nothing as a body against them. And many from other towns joined with them, in this new form, from time to time; and Elder Moulton was often called to other places to preach and baptize, in and after the year 1749. Yea, he was called above eighty miles that year, and baptized ten at Bridgewater, and three in Raynham. But as his people had been trained up with prejudices against hireling ministers, they did very little for the support of their own minister; therefore he took to merchandizing, when there were scarcely any merchants in that part of the country; and he seemed to prosper for a number of years, and was a leader in building them a new meeting-house. But towards the close of the war, which ended in 1763, money was plenty, and merchants were multiplied; and Mr. Moulton found himself involved in debt, and his creditors ready to devour him, and he fled to Nova Scotia, where he preached in several places. Hereupon the church looked out for another minister, and at length obtained Mr. James Mellen, who was ordained their pastor, September 11, 1765. He was of Framingham, but had joined the First Baptist church in Middleborough; and he was a faithful and successful



pastor, until he finished his course in a joyful manner, August 5, 1769. After his death many of the old members, who had been excluded from church for twenty years, came up and claimed a right therein ; upon which they sent to other elders and churches for advice, and when they had heard the case, their advice was for each of them to endeavor to satisfy the others about the reality of their religion, and so to covenant together anew. And this advice was taken and followed with good effects. After this they called Mr. Elijah Coddington, another member of the First Baptist church in Middleborough, and he was ordained their pastor, November 11, 1773. And though it was a low time with them at South Brimfield for some years, yet such a heavenly shower was granted in 1779, as increased their members from twenty-three to two hundred and thirty-six in four years, and their minister still remains with them. And in those times Mr. Moulton obtained letters of license from his creditors to come home, and he was esteemed among his old people, until he died there in 1783.<sup>1</sup>

A Baptist church was formed in West Springfield, and Edward Upham, A. M., was ordained their pastor, October 15, 1740. He was born at Malden, March 26, 1709, and educated in the college at Cambridge, where he took his first degree in 1734. After the death of Mr. John Callender, he was prevailed with to move to Newport, in 1749, and he ministered to the first church there, only visiting his old people once or twice a year, until he removed back to them in April, 1771. Though in the mean time some of the wealthiest Baptists had been drawn into the incorporation of a new parish there, and to settle a minister, who was to sprinkle or dip people as they chose, and all were to commune together. And when Mr. Upham came back and set up worship at his usual place, taxes to the government were laid upon him, and he could not obtain the liberty that all settled ministers have, without suing for it in two or three courts. And many broils, and great bitterness of spirit has been among them ever since. Mr. Upham has been so infirm that he has not been able to preach for some years past, and the people are in very broken circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

The town of Ashfield was planted in 1751, and a Baptist church was formed there, July 10, 1761, and Mr. Ebenezer Smith was ordained their pastor the 20th of August following. An account of their sufferings was given in pages 148—153. In 1770 they had thirty-two members, and they increased from time to time, until the glorious blessings of the year 1780 raised their number to ninety-four. But the uncommon difficulties about money, after the war, caused a contention between the minister and the majority of the church about his support, which produced an open division in 1785. They called a council in December, 1786, who justified the minister, and condemned the majority of the church, and in September, 1788, he prevailed with the Warren Association to leave them out of their num-

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 31, 278, 279.—ED.

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 33, 34 ; Vol. I, pp. 512—516.—ED.

ber. But a powerful work began among them at that time, and they increased to a hundred and thirteen members in less than two years, having ordained his brother as their pastor. But as there have been some very unhappy actions in both parties, they have need of considering the warning which was given to the churches of Galatia, which is, If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. Gal. v. 15.

A Baptist church was formed at Montague, July 1, 1765. An account of their sufferings is in pages 163—165. Mr. Simeon Coombs, from the Third Baptist church in Middleborough, removed there, and was ordained in that church, November 10, 1791. The majority of their society then lived in Leverett, and they now bear that name. Mr. Coombs ministered to them about three years, and then was dismissed, and removed to Wardsborough, in Vermont.

The First Baptist church in Wilbraham was constituted in 1768, and Mr. Seth Clark was ordained their pastor, June 13, 1770. He was born in Northampton in April, 1723, and experienced a change of heart in the glorious work there in 1735, under the ministry of President Edwards. This church had thirty-nine members in 1773, after which our national controversies and a bloody war engaged the minds of men in general, until it pleased God to pour out his Spirit in such a manner in 1778, as increased this church to a hundred and sixty-one members in four years, beside those who had died, been dismissed or excluded. After peace was restored to our land, the minds of people were amazingly carried away with earthly vanities, and the love of many waxed cold about religion. Yet this church enjoyed many blessings, and they wrote to our Association in 1792, and said, "Through the goodness of God, we are visited with the down-pouring of his Spirit in a most marvellous manner, not only in almost all parts of this town, and in each denomination, but also in the adjoining towns. Our present number is two hundred and thirty-five." They wrote again in 1794, that they had dismissed thirty-four, who were formed into a second Baptist church in Wilbraham, while two hundred and twenty-eight members remained in the first church. These blessings will appear the more wonderful, if we consider that the insurrection<sup>1</sup> in 1787 was in these parts.

The Baptist church in New Salem was formed in January, and Mr. Samuel Bigelow was ordained their pastor, May 21, 1772. He was born at Watertown in 1738, and new born in 1763. A gradual increase was granted to this church, until they had thirty-eight members in 1785. But controversies about discipline in the church were followed by a bloody contest in the State, which made rending work among this people. The army which marched up against the insurgents in the winter of 1787, took their

<sup>1</sup>See p. 330.—Ed.

course through Wilbraham to Springfield, where a few were slain, from whence they went to Hadley, and then turned through New Salem to Petersham. Mr. Bigelow wrote to a friend on August 31, 1787, and said:—

Church travel and ordinances have ceased here, ever since the people arose in arms against government; though at present we are better united as to public worship. There is in general a good agreement between me and the body of the people about worship. I have said but little about the family quarrel that has been in this Commonwealth the year past; but what I have said has been to condemn both sides. I think the political fathers have provoked their children to wrath, and by oppression wise men have been mad, and the children have been unruly and rebellious.

And it was a low time among them for three years. But he wrote to the same friend, February 12, 1790, and said:—

This part of Zion has scarce ever been without a few drops of the rain of righteousness; but about six weeks ago, the Lord began to rain such a shower as has not fallen in these parts before. It is chiefly on the youth, from ten to twenty years old. The people in general are bowed before it. A goodly number are hopefully gathered in, and some from almost every family. There is also some shaking among the dry bones in Shutesbury.

Mr. Bigelow had been dismissed from his pastoral relation to this church before, by the advice of a council: and he preached in various places afterwards, until he gathered a church in Belchertown, and is at present their minister. They obtained several ministers to preach in New Salem, until Mr. Josiah Orcutt was ordained their pastor, October 30, 1794, and continues with them.

When the late war began, the Congregational minister of Shutesbury openly appeared to favor the British claims over America; therefore the people shut him out of their meeting-house, and he afterwards removed from the town. Yet after the war he sued the town for his salary, and our courts compelled the town to pay it, which caused ministerial tyranny to appear so odious, that no minister of that order has been received in the town since. Mr. William Ewing was called to preach there for several years, and in 1779, he was elected a delegate to the convention which formed the Massachusetts constitution of government, and he earnestly opposed the continuance of the Congregational establishment therein, as other Baptist members also did, though the majority prevailed against them. A happy revival of religion was granted in Shutesbury in 1780, when a Baptist church was formed there, and Ewing ministered to the town until 1785, when he went to Rowley. Mr. Joseph Smellage was called from South Brimfield to preach at Shutesbury directly after, and he was ordained the pastor of this church in October, 1786, and they have enjoyed many blessings since, and he is continued with them to this time.

The Association Minutes give the number of members in the churches of Leyden, Chesterfield, and Coleraine; but a more full account of them,



which I had an encouragement of, has not arrived. Mr. Adam Hamilton, who came from Britain, had lived some years in Westfield before a revival of religion was granted there, and a Baptist church was formed in 1784, and he was ordained their pastor in November, 1785. He was much esteemed as a preacher of the gospel, and labored much at home and abroad; and when the Danbury Association was formed, he had a chief lead therein for two or three years. But he then removed to New York, and was minister to a church there in 1793; after which he came back to Westfield, but fell into some scandals, which caused him to cease from preaching. Another Baptist church was formed in part of Westfield, in 1785, which part is since incorporated by the name of Russell, and Mr. Ebenezer Stow is their pastor. The other churches in the county of Hampshire, with the date of their constitution and their present state, are given in the foregoing list, from printed minutes and the best information I could gain. I am favored with a more particular account of some of the following churches.

#### COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE.

The lands near the head of Hoosac River, which runs into the Hudson at Stillwater, were purchased by some men in Providence and Coventry in 1766, and a number of men removed there the next year. They first called the place New Providence; but the place was afterward a part of the town of Adams, having Lanesborough on the south of it, until part of several towns was incorporated by the name of Cheshire in 1793. The first inhabitants soon set up public worship among them, and being joined by others from various parts of the country, they formed a Baptist church there, August 29, 1769. Elder Peter Worden paid them a visit in the fall after; and, as many of them had been his people before, he, at their earnest request, removed there in March, 1770. He was born June 6, 1728, and ordained at Warwick, May 21, 1751, and, after many labors in those parts, now removed to this place, and has been, to a large extent, a leader among the churches which form the Shaftsbury Association. An uncommon death in the beginning of 1772, with a sermon at the funeral, was the means of beginning a revival of religion among this people; and in the fall after, the work came on more powerfully, and prevailed through the winter. As the church gave a written account of this work, the most material part of it is here inserted. They say:—

The children of God began to be more manifestly quickened, and more earnestly engaged than they before had been. Love and unity daily increased, and concern of mind began to be powerful on the minds of the unregenerate; and not long after, some began to give hopeful evidences that they had passed from death unto life. The first of our young converts that made a public declaration of what God had done for them, were received into the church and baptized on November 15, 1773. Soon after this, dis-

trass of soul, and awakenings on the consciences of sinners, became more geueal, so that it was manifest by their uncommon attention and solemnity in public meetings, and their earnest inquiries and lamentable complaints in their private conversation, that the Spirit of God was operating ou many of them; and in the course of the ensuing winter and spring, we had reason to hope that near forty were savingly brought home to God, by a living union to Jesus Christ. Our number of members has increased to about eighty. And although upon the most close inquiry, there appears to be a great variety of circumstances in the subjects of the late work, yet in several things there appeared a general agreement. A clear conviction of sin, of the universal depravity of human nature, the reasonable requirements of God's holy law, his just declaration of vengeance against sin, and the total shutting up of all the sources of their natural hope, which is ever seeking some legal qualification to prepare for God's mercy; and then a discovery of the all sufficient righteousness of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, a sensible union to God, love to holiness, hatred of sin, union to the children of God, and pity and benevolence to all mankind; in these and in other things of like nature, there appeared a very general agreement. The means of awakening people among us have been various, as, the preaching of the word, prayer, exhortation, religious conversation, occurrences of divine providence, and the like; but the public relations of experiences of those who have been wrought upon, have been as frequent a means as any. The most of the subjects of this work were in the vigor of youth, from fifteen to twenty-five years; though we have reason to think that some who were advanced in age, and some little children, have been made the happy partakers of the salvation of God. This church does not receive any as members, but such as give satisfying evidences that they are born of God, neither have they table-communion with any but those who profess and practice believers' baptism. They make no bar of communion, whether persons come under hands or not. They hold to a general right in the brethren to improve their gifts, and yet believe that the church ought to exercise government therein, so that the church may be edified by the gifts of the brotherhood. We believe the entire depravity of human nature, and that the justification of a sinner before God is alone in the righteousness of Christ. This was publicly read and acknowledged by the church as a true relation.

PETER WORDEN, Elder,	} Deacons.
JONATHAN RICHARDSON,	
STEPHEN CARPENTER,	
SAMUEL LOW,	

January 15, 1774.

Another powerful work began among this people in 1779, which increased the church to a hundred and thirty-three members in 1782. A great blessing was again granted in 1788, which caused the addition of eighty members to this church in a year. A like favor was given again in 1791, so that the next year they had a hundred and ninety-four members. But many have been dismissed to other churches, while some have died, and some have been excluded, so that their present number is not so large.

Elder Nathan Mason and his people, who went to Nova Scotia in 1763, enjoyed many spiritual blessings there, and Mr. Job Seamans was con-

verted, and began to preach among them; but not finding the lands in that country, nor the government of it, to answer their expectations, they removed back, and settled in Lanesborough, a few miles from Elder Worden, where a church was established in 1771; and the work which came on in 1779 was powerful in both churches, and caused such a friendship between them as gradually removed the separation that had been handed down from their fathers, about laying on of hands upon every member. His church increased to a hundred and fifty members in 1784, and enjoyed many blessings afterwards. But when Elder Mason joined with Elder Leland in 1791, a few of the church parted from him, and retain their old constitution, as was before mentioned. Elder John Leland was born in the county of Worcester, and was baptized and began to preach there in 1774. In the fall of 1776, he set off with his wife, whom he had newly married, and removed into Virginia, and settled in the county of Orange; and he travelled and preached abundantly in those parts, and in fourteen years he baptized six hundred and seven persons, and chiefly in the years 1780 and 1788, in which years religion was greatly revived in Virginia. He was very helpful in obtaining the law, in 1786, which abolished all taxes and compulsion in Virginia for the support of any religious ministers. He published a pamphlet called the *Virginia Chronicle*, in which was the address of the Baptists to President Washington, and his answer, which we have referred to under 1789. He has also published several other things; and he returned with his family to New England in 1791, and settled in Cheshire, in that part which once was Lanesborough, and Elder Mason is in the church with him, which is now large.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John Leland was born in Grafton, May 14, 1754. He united with the Baptist church in Bellingham. He had rare natural powers of eloquence and a wonderfully ready wit, but was eccentric, and sometimes unstable and unsound. While he was settled in Cheshire the farmers around him made a mammoth cheese, weighing thirteen hundred pounds, and sent it by him as a present to President Jefferson. Mr. Leland made the journey a grand preaching tour of four months, in which he preached seventy-four times, tarrying wherever an interest was aroused and a prospect opened of doing good. Curiosity to see the mammoth cheese, and to hear the "mammoth priest," drew together immense congregations.

In his later years, Mr. Leland labored efficiently in Massachusetts in the cause of religious freedom, which he had done so much to secure in Virginia. A characteristic speech on this subject, which he delivered to the legislature of Massachusetts in 1811, may be found in *Benedict's History*, Vol. II, pp. 482—486.

In 1810, Mr. Leland wrote, "The number of persons that I have baptized is now eleven hundred and sixty-three."

As indicating his views and the character of his preaching, we subjoin an extract from his brief manuscript autobiography, now in the possession of the Backus Historical Society:—"At the close of the year 1806, I got amazingly distressed on account of my preaching, fearing that my barrenness in the ministry was owing to improper addresses. The Methodists were exceedingly zealous and successful, and



Mr. Valentine Rathbun was born at Stonington, in December, 1723, and after he, with many of his friends, removed to Pittsfield, they formed a Baptist church there in 1772, and he was ordained their pastor, and they became a large church in 1780. But many of them had now become corrupt in their opinions, and imagined that great and new things were at hand, with a more glorious dispensation than had before been known. And in April that year a man came into the place, and informed them that a company of Christians appeared above Albany, who had greater light and power than any had enjoyed before in latter ages; and many went up and joined to them, among whom were Mr. Rathbun, of Pittsfield, and Mr. Samuel Johnson, a Presbyterian minister in New Lebanon, west of Pittsfield, in the State of New York; and most of the inhabitants of that town received them, as well as a large part of Elder Rathbun's church. Though in about three months he left them, and published a discourse against their abominations, dated December 5, 1780, which was so well received, that it passed five editions in a year, and was read much in all parts of the country. His brother, Daniel Rathbun, continued with them about four years, and then he came out from them, and published a more full account of their delusions than any before had done. But though those Shakers are now reduced to a small number, and their power to deceive others seems to be gone, yet many who had joined with them have turned off to other delusions, instead of coming into the way of truth. But a few names in Pittsfield are steadfast in their profession.<sup>1</sup>

The place now called Hancock, upon the New York line, was first called Jericho, into which a number of Baptists moved in 1768, and following years, it being a wilderness before; and they met for worship with a num-

the addresses of their ministers were general and undaunted. I visited them; I conversed with them; they were all for heaven, and assured they were in the way; but their zeal and confidence appeared to me like the mighty wind and fire in Elijah's vision, and I could not discover that any with whom I conversed had any knowledge of themselves, of the law of God, or of the way of pardon. The Gillite mode of addressing sinners seemed a little different from the New Testament mode. The Hopkinsian method appeared as if it took all the wisdom of God to devise a way for an honorable pretense to damn men. Dr. Fuller only cast another bundle of straw on the fire. So that the great query that has agitated my mind for more than thirty years,—“How is a congregation of sinners to be addressed?” at the time which I am now treating of, fell with such distress upon my mind that I could hardly contain myself. But in the midst of my difficulties, I had a meeting at a school-house. In the time of service, my soul got into the *trade winds*, and, without consulting Gill, Wesley, Hopkins, or Fuller, without comparing our translation with the Septuagint, Chaldee, or the king of Spain's Bible, I addressed the scholars and young people in a way that I never can without God helps me. The Spirit of the Lord fell upon them. Very soon after this, five of them came forward and confessed Christ.”

—ED.

<sup>1</sup>See p. 297.—ED.

ber of brethren who lived over said line, until they chose to be a society by themselves, where Steventon church now is. Therefore in June, 1772, fifteen persons in Hancock joined in covenant as a church of Christ, and Elder Clarke Rogers became their minister, though I have not obtained the date of his ordination. He went from West Greenwich, in the State of Rhode Island, from which State a large number of people went, who planted that northern wilderness. In the fall and winter after this church was formed, a powerful work came on among them. They say :—

There seemed to be a remarkable out-pouring of God's Spirit on the people, and the saints were much engaged in his cause, while the word, like arrows, pierced the hearts of sinners, who were crying out under the guilt of sin ; and when some obtained deliverance, they were expressing the joy of their hearts, visiting their neighbors, warning them to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold on the hope of eternal life. Old and young were bowing to the sceptre of King Jesus, and with one united voice saying, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord ; hosanna in the highest. There were open conferences held once a fortnight, to hear the declarations of any who desired to join the church ; and there was not a conference for many months, but that some were added to our number. Twenty were baptized in one day, and fifteen more in about a fortnight. Our number increased in one year from fifteen to one hundred and eleven, and other churches were gathered round us, and some were given up to them for conveniency, and some few were disciplined and have gone off from us, so that our present number is ninety-six.

This account was signed August 13, 1774, by Clark Rogers, elder, David Vaughan, Caleb Carr, William Douglass, Jesse Southwick and Ichabod Southwick. But in the most trying time of the war, when General Burgoyne sent out part of his army towards Bennington in 1777, and Captain Douglass collected his company together, ready to march against them next morning, some of his men went off to the enemy in the night, and appeared with them in battle the next day, when such a victory was gained as greatly revived the hearts of the Americans, and Burgoyne and his army were captivated soon after. This defection of some of the Baptists, in Hancock, caused a division in the church, and another was formed and continued many years ; but they are lately united again, and one young man who then went to the enemy, has not only manifested repentance, but also such ministerial gifts, that he is ordained the pastor of a large Baptist church near the place where Burgoyne was taken. How marvellous are the works of God !

A Baptist church was formed in Washington in November, 1777, and Mr. John Nichols is their pastor, who was ordained in 1784. Another church was constituted in Sandisfield in August, 1779, and Elder Joshua Morse became their pastor. He was born in an uncultivated part of Rhode Island colony, where he never went to any religious meeting until he was sixteen years old ; but in hearing the clear preaching of the gospel soon af-

ter, he not only became acquainted with experimental religion, but an exhorter of others to regard it, until he commenced a public preacher, and he was ordained the pastor of a church in New London, in Connecticut, May 17, 1750. It was in that part of the town which is now set off by the name of Montville. The Stonington Association met there in 1773, the year after they were first formed. Mr. Morse was much esteemed as a clear preacher of the gospel, with uncommon solemnity, and with much success. But in the time of the war, his people were much exposed to the enemy, and many of them removed away, until their minister, by the advice of a council, removed also and settled at Sandisfield, where his public ministrations, and private conversation, were edifying and beneficial, and he preached occasionally elsewhere, until he died in a joyful manner, in June, 1795, in the seventieth year of his age. The other Baptist church in that town I have not received a history of,<sup>1</sup> nor of Great Barrington and Williamstown.

<sup>1</sup>The following is from an account of the Second Baptist church in Sandisfield, which was sent to Mr. Backus by a committee of the church in 1801 :—

“In the year 1784, not far from the month of June, Daniel Fowler, Timothy Judd, and Amos Spring, living in a place since called Bethlehem, and Isaac Walker, in the east part of Tyringham, being remote from any meeting, agreed to set up one at Timothy Judd’s, to sing and pray and read sermons. These, with their families, were of the Presbyterian denomination; and agreed that no other denomination should ever come among them, to assist in carrying on their worship. Thus they continued about three years and a half. About the month of November, 1787, a stranger stopped in the neighborhood, who was of the Baptist denomination, and attended those meetings. Notice was given that this man sometimes spoke in public. A council was held whether they should let this man speak with them. The result was, ‘He might speak *once*.’ There seemed to be such a blessing that followed his improvement, that they desired him to improve with them again, which he did. From this, in a most wonderful manner, the Lord began to work like himself. Displays of redeeming grace were conspicuous. Dagon fell before God’s holy ark. The wilderness began to bud and blossom like the fields of Paradise, and on them that sat in the valley of the shadow of death, the sun of righteousness beamed the effulgence of his glory. This continued through the winter following. This work spread into the adjacent vicinities, and awakened much opposition, some saying that it was the work of the devil; others said, ‘Can he that hath a devil open the eyes of the blind?’ However, in April following, Elder Seth Clark, Joseph Dunham, and Ezekiel Wright, from Wilbraham, were sent for, and on the 25th of said month, nineteen were baptized, and a church was then constituted and fellowshipped by Elder Clark, with the delegates, it being called the Second Baptist church in Sandisfield, because it was constituted in that town, and the most of the members belonged to it. Still a general opposition on every hand continued; but the Lord added to the church, and carried on his glorious work with a continued increase for about two years, which brought us to the number of forty. In March, 1790, the church agreed to set apart Brother Benjamin Baldwin to the work of the ministry, which was performed on the 9th of June following, by ordination.”

The sketch goes on to describe the acts of oppression to which the church was subjected, by being taxed for the support of Presbyterian ministers, and to build a



Bullocksgrant is a tract of land which was granted to some men from Rehoboth, which lies between Cheshire and Hawley, but it is not yet incorporated as a town. A number of people from Middleborough, Taunton, and Berkeley, have also removed there, and a number of them joined to the first church in Cheshire. But a powerful work came on among them, and a Baptist church was formed, and Mr. Nathau Haskins was ordained their pastor, January 28, 1789. He went from Berkeley in the county of Bristol, and many blessings have been granted under his ministry since. A Baptist church was formed in West Stockbridge, January 29, 1781, and Mr. Elnathan Wilcox was installed as their pastor; but they were afterwards broken and scattered. Yet a Baptist church was gathered in Stockbridge and West Stockbridge in 1790, and Samuel Whelpley, A. M. was ordained their pastor. He was graduated by the college at Providence in 1790, and still continues with that people. I have not obtained a particular history of the other Baptist churches in that county.

But a particular account of the change which was wrought in one person, may give a more clear idea of the nature of the work that was going on in those parts. A poor woman who was brought up in the wilderness, in such a manner as not to have learned to read, gave the following relation of her experiences, in the time of the revival at Hancock in the fall and winter of 1772, 1773. She said:—

I lived in Little Hoosac, and I heard of a wonderful work of God in Jericho, how many were converted, which caused me to reflect on my past life, which terrified me much. One night I dreamed that the devil was come for me; I thought he came in a flash of fire, which struck me down to hell, into great torment; then I lamented my condition, how I had neglected my salvation, and now my day was over. Thus I awoke in great surprise, and told my husband, who told me not to regard it, for dreams were nothing. But my guilty conscience terrified me so that I could have no rest, day nor night; my sins appeared very heinous, until I thought I could not live long under such horror. I went one day to meeting at Jericho, and thought I would never return till I had found some relief, for I could not live so; and I went and heard the number of fifteen tell the dealings of God with them; and they would tell my heart, only they had found

Presbyterian meeting-house. At first they gave certificates, or escaped restraint or imprisonment by payment of taxes, but at last they said, “‘Be it known to thee, O king, (or civil power in religion,) that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the image which the civil court at Boston has set up, believing that our God is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace.’” Able attorneys were employed, and the Presbyterians found that their town meetings had not been conducted in a legal manner. They revoked their own doings, and assessed finally only their own denomination.”

In 1798, the two Baptist churches in Sandisfield were blessed with a revival, and about sixty were added to each church. In the two succeeding years, the Second church received about twenty each year. In 1801, their number was a hundred and seventy-five.—ED.

deliverance, and I had not, which made me think there was no mercy for me: I was an undone creature, and my sins appeared more heinous than before. There was a lecture in the evening, and I went to hear it, and the minister preached very powerfully, and instead of yielding me any relief, it added to my torment. I thought I had one more sermon to account with God for, unless I obtained pardon through Jesus Christ, which I thought was not for me, I had been such a great sinner. My load was so heavy that I thought I could not bear up under it. I called my sister out of meeting, and told her that I felt so that it seemed as though I could not live. She gave me but little answer, and meeting being over, I went to a house to lodge, and the people were talking of religion, but I was no company for them. I felt like a lonesome monument of God's displeasure. I got but a little sleep that night. Next morning I set out to go home, and these words were ushered into my mind, Turn, O sinner, why will you die? But I thought that I had done all that I could, and there was no mercy for me; then these thoughts came into my mind, You have not given up your heart to God; and I found my whole heart to be a sink of sin, and that I had been at enmity against a just and holy God all my life long, and that God was angry with the wicked every day; and I saw myself to be such a creature that I wondered that he would suffer me to walk on his footstool. I wondered that the earth did not open and swallow me up; as I passed along I was afraid that every tree would fall on me and dash me to pieces, and I would run to get clear of one, and the fear of another would take me. Still these words would follow me, Turn, O sinner, why will you die? At length I was brought to view the justice of God, and that I was a rebel justly condemned, and had been provoking God to anger all my life long, and was now about to receive the just reward of my deeds, and could only plead guilty before God, on which consideration I was brought to yield myself into his hands, with this repeated cry, Mercy, Lord, mercy, if possible; though I could see no way that God could be just and shew mercy to such a wretch as I was. While I was, as it were, sinking with these melancholy thoughts, those words were ushered into my mind in a remarkable manner, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." These words gave me some glimpse of hope. The heft of my burden seemed to be taken away, and I felt calm and peaceable, but I could not tell what it might be. I thought that if I was converted I should see Christ, and I would go out in the evening, and look on the firmament, expecting to see Christ; but then these words were ushered into my mind, "Peace to all the children of God, and peace to thy soul." Then I went in and got the Bible, for my husband to try to learn me to read, and I could spell a little: and as I tried to read I thought the Lord assisted me in reading; and I said, Husband, it seems to me that the Lord assists me in reading, I never could read so before. I had no sooner spoken than my soul was filled with divine love, yea, more than full. I thought there was enough for all the world to swim away unto the blissful shores of eternal day. My tongue broke out in raptures of praise, crying, Glory, glory to God in the highest! for he hath redeemed my soul from the horrible pit! I thought I wanted to tell all the world of the fullness there was in Christ.

## CHAPTER XL.

A CONCISE VIEW OF THE DISTRICT OF MAINE.—ACCOUNTS OF BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE COUNTY OF YORK.—COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND.—CONTROVERSIES ABOUT LAND IN THE COUNTY OF LINCOLN.—OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCHES THEREIN.—OF THEIR GREAT INCREASE SINCE 1790.—OF THEIR FAITH AND ORDER, AND OPPRESSION FROM OTHERS.—OF THE COUNTIES OF HANCOCK AND WASHINGTON, WITH A REVIEW OF LINCOLN.

The kings of England claimed a power of giving the lands of the heathen in America to their subjects ; and in 1639 a grant was made to Sir Ferdinando Gorges, of all the lands between Piscataqua and Sagadahoc, and a hundred and twenty miles into the country, under the name of The Province of Maine. But this grant, and all others of the like nature, were imitations of the Pope of Rome, who received his power from the old dragon. And the inspired apostle says, I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake like a dragon, and he exerciseth all the power of the first beast. Rev. xiii. 2, 11, 12. The same power had before granted the charter of the Massachusetts, which extended three miles north of every part of Merrimack River, which they construed so as to reach a line from the head of the river to Casco Bay. And though New Hampshire was taken from them in 1680, yet they exercised a power beyond it afterwards. In 1681, a number of men came from Kittery to Boston, and joined the Baptist church there, one of whom was William Screven, to whom they gave an approbation to preach the gospel, January 11, 1682. But he was persecuted for preaching in those parts, by ministers and rulers. Yet Elder Hull and others were sent from Boston, by the request of those people, to organize a church among them.<sup>1</sup> And a church was constituted in Kittery, September 25, 1682, consisting of William Screven, elder, Humphrey Churchwood, deacon, Robert Wil-

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 400—405.



liams, John Morgandy, Richard Cutts, Timothy Davis, Leonard Drown, William Adams, Humphrey Azell, George Litten, and a number of sisters. Elder Screven and others were repeatedly carried to courts, where sentences were passed against them, of fines and imprisonment, until they removed from such persecutors; and Screven went to South Carolina, and became the pastor of the Baptist church in Charleston, from whence he wrote to Mr. Ellis Callender, of Boston, June 2, 1707. He wrote again to him, August 6, 1708, and said, "I rejoice that you are inclined to, and employed in the blessed work of the Lord, for the support of his cause and the comfort of his saints, left of that poor languishing church with you." Colonel Thomas Screven, a leading man amongst the Baptists now in Charleston, sprang from him. Leonard Drown removed to Boston, and his son was deacon in the Baptist church there for many years, and his posterity remain in these parts ever since, one of whom is a Fellow of our college at Providence.<sup>1</sup> But we hear no more of any Baptist church in those parts for above eighty years after.

There was a revival of religion in Berwick about the time that there was through a great part of the country, and after Mr. Hezekiah Smith was settled at Haverhill, he was sent for to Berwick, in 1767, and baptized a considerable number; and he went again the next year and assisted in forming a Baptist church there, June 28, 1768. Mr. Joshua Emery was their teacher, though he was not ordained; and they gave in certificates of their society according to law, and yet were taxed to parish ministers, and spoiling of goods or imprisonment was fiercely pursued for some years, for the collection of those taxes, until some trials in courts put a stop thereto.<sup>2</sup> A division took place in this church and society a few years after, and Mr. Emery preached to one part, and Mr. William Hooper was ordained pastor of the other, August 14, 1776, in which office he has continued ever since. He was born at Berwick, February 28, 1747, but he resides at Madbury, where is a branch of this church, and he preaches part of his time at each place. Sanford is above Berwick, where a Baptist church was formed, and Mr. Pelatiah Tingley, who went from Attleborough, was ordained there, October 22, 1772. But he afterwards removed to Waterborough, where he is pastor of a church that is not in full fellowship with most of our Baptist churches; though another church was formed in that town in their fellowship, and Mr. Henry Smith was ordained their pastor in 1794. A Baptist church was formed at Wells, in 1780, and Mr. Nathaniel Lord, of Berwick, was ordained their pastor. Dr. Moses Hemmenway lives in that town, whose writings have been before mentioned. A Baptist church was formed in Coxhall, October 29, 1782, and Mr. Simon Lock was ordained their pastor, December 18, 1783. Mr. Tozer Lord, an older brother to Nathaniel, was ordained in a church at Lebanon, above Berwick, in

<sup>1</sup>Solomon Drown, M. D.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 165.

1776 ; but that church is dissolved, and he now is minister of a church in Shapleigh. Another church was formed in that town in 1785, and Mr. Nehemiah Davis is their pastor. Mr. Zebadiah Richardson was minister of the church at Sanford in 1788, who is now pastor of a church in Fryeburg, on the west borders of the county of York. There was a powerful work in Francisburg in 1788, from whence above twenty persons joined to Sanford church. A Baptist church was formed in Cornish in 1792.

The first Baptist church in the county of Cumberland was formed at Gorham, by assistance from Haverhill, June 20, 1768. Mr. Smith, of Haverhill, had been sent for, and baptized some persons there the fall before. An account of their sufferings is in pages 179—181. It is said that a majority of them have since embraced the opinion of general redemption, and yet hold to the final perseverance of the saints ; and they are not in fellowship with most of our churches. A Baptist church was formed in New Gloucester in May, 1782, and they tried various ways to get clear of oppression from the Congregational party, and to support their own worship, until they applied to our legislature, and obtained an incorporation of a Baptist society, invested with all the powers and privileges of other parishes. But in about four years many of them found this to be such a bondage, that they renounced the scheme, and formed a new Baptist church in October, 1794, and they joined the Bowdoinham Association in August, 1795. A number of people in Harpswell had experienced a happy change in former times, and a fresh revival began among them in 1783, which led on to the forming of a Baptist church there, January 20, 1785. Mr. James Potter had labored with success among them, and on October 6, 1785, he was ordained there as a travelling minister ; and Mr. Samuel Woodward, who was raised up among them, was ordained their pastor in October, 1792. In the mean time such a rain of righteousness was granted in those parts, as caused the wilderness to become a fruitful field ; and three churches were formed in one year. Those of Hebron and Buckfield were formed in August, and that of Paris in November, 1791 ; and Mr. James Hooper, brother to William, was ordained at Paris, June 25, 1795. Mr. Samuel Flagg, who went from Boston, is preaching at Hebron. Mr. Abraham Cummings, who was educated in the college at Providence, where he took his first degree in 1776, preached for some years in the Congregational way, until he was convinced that believers' baptism was the way that Christ instituted, and was baptized in March, 1783 ; and in the spring of 1787 he removed into the county of Cumberland, and preached so much in the parish of Freeport, that they gave him a good farm, but he could not be ordained as a parish minister because he could not sprinkle infants. He has travelled and preached in many of our new plantations, but a number of persons were baptized in North Yarmouth in the fall of 1795, who purpose to form a church there, and to call him to be their minister. He lately

published a discourse upon baptism. The late revival was powerful in Livermore, and a Baptist church was formed there, August 7, 1793. Two brethren, Elisha Williams and Otis Robinson, are preachers among them, though not ordained. The first of them is a son of Dr. Williams, of East Hartford, and was educated at Yale College; but the spiritual teaching which he has received in that wilderness, he prefers above all human learning. The other went from Attleborough. A Baptist church was formed at Sudbury, Canada, August 30, 1795.

The great collection of the waters of the rivers Kennebeck and Androscoggin, with the rivers that fall into them, were called Sagadahoc. A number of men came from England, and began a plantation there in 1607, thirteen years before our fathers began at Plymouth, but they went back again the next year. But the colony of Plymouth obtained a grant from England of a tract of land of fifteen miles wide on each side of Kennebeck River, where they carried on a trade with the Indians from 1630 to 1661, when they sold the same to four men. Though in the mean time, after the parliament of England had prevailed against the king who made those grants of American lands, particular men obtained deeds of a great part of them from Indian sachems, until an agent for the Massachusetts bought the whole of Gorges's grant of his heirs in 1676, and then those lands were claimed by this government. And the charter of 1691 gave them all the lands from thence to Nova Scotia, and this government has been often granting lands since to particular men unto this time. So that a great part of the same lands have been claimed by grants from the crown, by deeds from the Indians, and by grants from the legislature of the Massachusetts. Unspeakable troubles and costs of courts have been caused by these opposite claims, and when these controversies will all be settled no man can tell. A gentleman who was born in Berwick, but now lives in Boston, and is attorney-general for this State, published a history of the District of Maine in 1795, which gives much light into these affairs. Yet he appears to be not so clear in religious matters. For he says, "There never was any thing like persecution in the District of Maine, nor was there much pains taken, in the settlement of it, to establish a regular support for the clergy; the want of this was a great injury to the people, for experience fully advocates the point, that without a regular fixed mode of establishing teachers of piety, religion and morality, a country can never be made virtuous and happy." And yet he afterwards says, "In the present state of our governments in America, and in the enlightened age in which we live, religious opinions, however strongly they may be expressed, or however forcibly they may be urged, can do us no hurt."<sup>1</sup> But all ought to know, that reviling and lying, as well as spoiling of goods and imprisonment for matters of conscience, are persecution in the sight of God.

<sup>1</sup>Sullivan's History, pp. 79, 232.



Matt. v. 10, 11; Heb. x. 42—34. And has there been nothing like these in the District of Maine? And if religious opinions can do no hurt in our governments, how can teachers of piety, religion and morality do any good therein? For these virtues are plainly described in the word of God, which says, If any have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents. I Tim. v. 4. Pure religion, and undefiled, before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. James i. 27. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets. Matt. vii. 12. This is God's description of piety, religion and morality; but all men who support religious worship by force, violate these rules, more or less. The nation of Israel was the only visible church in the world which God empowered to use the sword in religious affairs; all adulterers, idolaters and blasphemers were to die without mercy. And when Christ by his death had abolished all hereditary distinctions among mankind, and built his church of those who were born again among all nations, the power of his gospel dashed the great Roman empire to pieces, without any help from the sword of the magistrate. But Mystery Babylon was built, by confounding nature and grace, church and world together. And when the fathers of the Massachusetts fled from her tyranny to America, they formed a government in imitation of the church of Israel, and they made a law to put all adulterers to death, the year after they first came to Boston. And they had plain Scripture for it, if the church of Christ is in the same covenant that God made with Abraham; for by that covenant all adulterers were to be put to death, and all bastards were excluded from the church. Levit. xx. 10; Deut. xxiii. 2. But the circumcision of the heart is essentially necessary, to give any person a right in the church of Christ. Therefore an inspired apostle says, Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Phil. iii. 2, 3. All men who trust in any arm of flesh, are cursed with blindness, so as not to see when good cometh; but they who trust in the Lord, and make him their hope, are like trees planted by a river, whose leaf shall be green, and they shall not cease from yielding fruit. Jer. xvii. 5—8. And all mankind are in one or the other of these two classes.

There was but little appearance of religion in the county of Lincoln, until God poured his Spirit upon them within a few years past. Mr. James Potter was born there in 1734, and was awakened to some sense of sin when he was about ten years old; and convictions followed him from time to time, until a clear deliverance was granted him, October 3, 1781. And he says:—

Now I began to see the base views I formerly had of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the plan of salvation : for when I had a discovery of actual sins, and of the danger I was exposed to thereby, I would repent and reform, and think what a glorious Saviour Christ was, and that some time or other he would save me from hell, and take me to glory, with a desire to be happy, but no desire to be holy. But, glory be to God ! he now gave me another view of salvation. Now I saw his law to be holy, and loved it, though I and all my conduct were condemned by it. Now I saw that God's justice did not strike against me as his creature, but as a sinner ; and that Christ died not only to save from punishment, but from sin itself. I saw that Christ's office was not only to make men happy, but also to make them holy, and the plan now looked beautiful to me, and I had no desire to have the least tittle of it altered, but all my cry was to be conformed to this glorious plan.<sup>1</sup>

It was then a very cold and stupid season all round him ; but the views which were then given him of the glory of the gospel, and of the worth of immortal souls, with the call of God to him to hold up the light which was given him to others, caused him to leave the management of his farm to his family, and to go from house to house, in his own town and to neighboring places, to hold forth light to all he could converse with, about the great concerns of the soul and eternity. And in the spring of 1782, he says, " The work began to break out wonderfully. Some were in great distress, and others praising God, and inviting others to come away to Jesus Christ." And a number of them were brought to hold believers' baptism, before they had ever seen a Baptist minister. Mr. Job Macomber was then preaching at New Gloucester, and, hearing of the work in the county of Lincoln, he went there in December, 1782, and preached in several places with great satisfaction ; and in January, 1783, he wrote a letter to Middleborough about it, which was read to Mr. Isaac Case, which had such an effect upon his mind, that he was ordained for the purpose in September, 1783, and went directly into those parts, and preached with success in Harpswell, and then with greater power at Thomaston, where he first arrived in February, 1784. Mr. Macomber also removed to Bowdoinham, in the fall of 1783, at the request of the people. And in the spring Mr. Lock was sent for from Coxhall, and a Baptist church was formed in Bowdoinham, May 24, and another at Thomaston, May 27, 1784. And Mr. Macomber was ordained the pastor of the first of these churches, August 18, 1784, while Mr. Case was settled as the pastor of the other, having been ordained before. Macomber was son to a Congregational deacon in Middleborough, but joined the First Baptist church there in 1772, began to preach in 1774, and labored in various parts of the country, until he settled where he now is. Case was born in Rehoboth, February 25, 1761, met with a change in December, 1779, began to preach in July, 1780, and was an early member of the Baptist church of Dighton, where he was ordained

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 281—283.

September 10, 1783, and went directly into those parts, where he is still useful.<sup>1</sup> As there was a great field for labor, and Mr. Elisha Snow, of Thomaston, was called into the work, their elders and brethren met at Harpswell, June 11, 1788, and ordained him as an itinerant minister. On the 29th of the same month, a Baptist church was formed in Vassalborough, and another at Bowdoin in the fall after, where Mr. Potter lived, and he became their pastor. Mr. Humphrey Purinton is also a useful preacher in that church. And a Baptist church was formed at Ballston, January 3, 1789. The churches of Bowdoinham, Thomaston, and Harpswell, began their Association in 1787, which had become six churches in August, 1790, and three hundred and seventeen members.

<sup>1</sup>The following extracts are from letters of Mr. Case, the former to James Lovell, of Barnstable, the latter to Mr. Backus:—

“Thomaston, June 22, 1784.

“DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I readily embrace this opportunity to write to you, to inform you of the gracious dealings of God with me of late, and not me only, but many others in these parts. I came from Rehoboth last September, and have been in these eastern parts ever since; and I desire to bless the Lord for directing me to this part of his vineyard. I think I have seen more of the power and glory of our God, since I have been in these parts, than ever I saw before; poor, shelterless souls fleeing to Christ for shelter, and praising the Lord for free grace through the merits of Christ's righteousness, [which] which runs down our streets like a mighty stream. The eyes of the blind are opened, and the ears of the deaf are unstopped. .... I have had occasion to baptize eighty-two persons since I came to this town. .... The brethren here have embodied themselves into a church in the Baptist order. I trust the Lord hath done this for his glory. ....”

“Thomaston, June 23, 1785.

“HONORED AND VERY DEAR SIR:—I would inform you that the dear Redeemer reigns in these parts. God hath done great things for this town in particular. It hath been a very stupid, barren wilderness in time past; but, thanks be to the God of love, he hath done great things for us, and caused the wilderness to bud and blossom as the rose. The work of the Lord begun here about the 18th of February, 1784, and went on very powerfully, and held so for about three months, and I believe there were sixty or seventy savingly brought home to God, and the chief of them were baptized; and the 27th of May, there were fifty unitedly and understandingly embodied into a church, and forty-six added since, several out of other towns. .... There are twenty-four in the church now that seem well established and united in the faith of the gospel, and we expect a number more will join next Saturday. We have spent this day in fasting and prayer to God. I trust it was not time spent in vain. .... There is a church embodied in Harpswell, in Cumberland county. There were twenty embodied together the 20th of January, 1785, and fourteen have joined since, so that there are thirty-four that seem well united. There are several more that stand ready to join when I visit them again. .... I hear the Lord is at work in a powerful manner up Kennebeck River, and to the head of Sheepscot River, and at Deer Island. I was there in May. Several were under deep concern, and several brought to rejoice in Christ Jesus. Surely God hath done, and is still doing, great things for these parts. ....”—Ed.



These new churches in a wilderness had the powers of the world against them, and also many under the Baptist name, who gathered some churches who held to doctrines which they could not have fellowship with, while they had many difficulties among themselves. Yet God was pleased to grant a fresh revival among them. The Second Baptist church in Bowdoin was constituted, August 17, 1791, and Mr. William Stinson was ordained their pastor, July 5, 1792. Another church was formed in Sidney, June 20, 1791, and Mr. Asa Wilbur was ordained their pastor, November 13, 1793. Mr. Lemuel Jackson, a member of that church, was ordained as a travelling minister the same day. The first of them was born in Bridgewater, the other in Middleborough, in the county of Plymouth. Mr. Potter was very successful in Lewiston, from the beginning of his public labors, and many joined his church from thence, until they obtained a regular dismission, and a church of twenty-two members was formed in Lewiston, March 3, 1792. And on August 3, 1793, thirteen of their members were dismissed, and formed a church in Greene. They also dismissed fourteen more, who formed the Third church in Bowdoin, February 13, 1794, at which time they had fifty-nine members left. And they say, "It appears that Elder James Potter, and Elder William Stinson, were the instruments that the Lord blessed in the awakening the greatest part of these, who appear to have been brought out of nature's darkness into the glorious liberty of the gospel." A Baptist church was formed at Readfield, May 11, 1792, and Elder Case removed and became their pastor, leaving the church in Thomaston under the care of Elder Snow. And on July 27, 1792, a church was formed in Stirling, now called Fayette, and Elder Eliphalet Smith became their pastor. He was converted at Stratham in 1764, and was ordained the pastor of a Congregational church in Deerfield, in New Hampshire, in January, 1770, though he and the majority of his church became Baptists in June following.<sup>1</sup> But in some years after, he removed into the county of Lincoln, and now became the pastor of this church. A Baptist church was formed on Muscongus Island, near Bristol, in 1792, and Mr. Andrew Fuller, who went from Middleborough, was ordained therein, October 30, 1793. Another church was formed at Cushing in 1792, and Mr. Ephraim Hall was ordained their pastor, October 24, 1793. A Baptist church was formed at Nobleborough, July 25, 1793, another at New Sandwich, January 9, 1794, and a third at Barretstown in December following. As many of the Baptists have removed from Martha's Vineyard to Sandy River, a high branch of the Kennebeck, they have called their town New Vineyard, and they formed a Baptist church there, August 8, 1795. Another was formed at Clinton the 5th of September after. Their elder, Mephibosheth Cain, was ordained at Clinton, January

<sup>1</sup>See p. 169.

12, and Nehemiah Gould and Job Chadwick at Vassalborough, January 15, 1796.

Thus, in less than twelve years, twenty-six Baptist churches have been formed in two counties, in which are fifteen ordained ministers, and about a thousand members. And in August, 1795, their Association gave a declaration of their faith, wherein they say:—

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God; we believe there is but one living and true God; we believe the important doctrines of three equal persons in the Godhead, eternal and personal election, original sin, particular redemption, free justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, efficacious grace in regeneration, the final perseverance of real believers, the resurrection of the dead, the future judgment, the eternal happiness of the righteous, and everlasting misery of the impenitent. We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Christ, to be continued until his second coming, and the former is requisite to the latter; that is to say, that those are to be admitted into the communion of the church, and so to partake of its ordinances, who, upon profession of their faith, have been baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Now in all these articles they agree with the most eminent fathers of New England, except in sprinkling infants upon the faith of their parents and calling it baptism, for which there is not a word in all the Holy Scriptures. But as a son of Gideon by his concubine, slew seventy of his lawful children, so one error of our fathers has prevailed against all their good principles and conduct. And all men who are now contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, are daily exposed to reviling and lying, spoiling of goods and imprisonment, from those who support their worship by force. We are well informed, that more than a hundred dollars have been taken from people of the Baptist sentiments in Topsham for a Pædobaptist minister in the town, by blending civil and ministerial taxes together; and the like is done in many other parts of the country. Thus men would hold their religion by the same power by which they hold their worldly estates; though they daily deny their neighbors the liberty about their souls which all enjoy about their bodies and estates. For no man is compelled to pay a farthing to any physician, unless he is pleased to employ him. And God says of false teachers, They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. They have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them? Jer. vi. 14; viii. 9—11. And who can tell how many such teachers there are in our day? Neither is any man obliged to employ or support lawyers, if he will live without them. But many who handle the law of God, shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, and neither go in themselves, nor suffer others to go into it. And yet, four States in New England deny the liberty to all men therein about their souls and eternity,

which they allow them concerning their bodies and temporal estates. And when will men open their eyes, and renounce this iniquity?

A revival of religion began on an island in Penobscot Bay, in the county of Hancock, now incorporated by the name of Islesborough, in the fall of 1790, and a Baptist church was formed there, May 27, 1791, and Mr. Thomas Eames was ordained their pastor, June 19, 1794. He and a number of his people went from Marshfield in the county of Plymouth. There is also a Baptist church at Eppin in this county, and Mr. Joshua Young is their pastor, who was ordained at Ballston, April 8, 1795. We have also heard of some Baptists in Gouldsburg, and Canaan, in this county, as well as of some in the county of Washington, but have not any such accounts of them as may be of service to the public. When the work of God was powerful in the county of Lincoln in 1784, one of the subjects of it observed, that the ministers who were settled and supported by law were not made use of therein, even when they preached good doctrine, which caused a serious inquiry in his mind, why it should be so. And having obtained a satisfying answer, he wrote the same to a friend, saying, "The voice of the general conduct of true ministers to sinners is, We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God that your souls may live: but the voice of others, to the church and the world is, We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled together that we may live." And the help of all the power of the ruling party in our government has not settled but thirteen of this last sort of teachers, in all the counties of Lincoln, Hancock and Washington, wherein are near sixty incorporated towns, and many other plantations.



## CHAPTER XLI.

### STATE OF RHODE ISLAND.—COUNTY OF PROVIDENCE.

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN AMERICA WAS PLANTED AT PROVIDENCE.

—THE LEADERS OF IT FOR A HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS.—PRESIDENT MANNING'S SUCCESS THEREIN.—THE HISTORY OF THIS CHURCH EVER SINCE.—A CONCISE VIEW OF THE COLLEGE.—OF CHURCHES IN SCITUATE, SMITHFIELD, GLOSTER, CUMBERLAND AND FOSTER.—OF OTHER CHURCHES IN THOSE TOWNS AND IN NORTH PROVIDENCE.—ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN NEWPORT.—OF THE SECOND.—THE THIRD.—FOURTH.—TIVERTON.—WARREN.—WASHINGTON COUNTY. GENERAL BAPTISTS THEREIN.—SABBATARIANS.—EXETER CHURCH.—AND MANY OTHERS.—COUNTY OF KENT.—GENERAL REMARKS.

The first civil government upon earth, since the rise of antichrist, which gave equal liberty of conscience, was begun in Providence; and there was also the first Baptist church in America. Mr. Roger Williams was born in Wales, in 1599, was educated at Oxford University,<sup>1</sup> and was introduced into the ministry in the church of England for some years, before he came over to America, and landed at Boston in February, 1631. When he came there, he could not agree with the ruling party, in their use of the sword in religious affairs, nor in their receiving the grant of American lands from the kings of England. This caused his going to Plymouth, where he preached above two years, and then he was called and ordained at Salem; but the controversy arose so high between him and the teachers and rulers of Massachusetts, that they passed a sentence of banishment against him in October, 1635, and in January, 1636, they attempted to seize him and send him back to England, but he fled to Rehoboth, and from thence to Providence, where he obtained a grant of lands from the Narragansett Indians.<sup>2</sup> And he says, "I was sorely tossed for fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean."<sup>3</sup> Yet he was so

<sup>1</sup>See a different account in Vol. I, p. 40, note.—ED.

<sup>2</sup>Winthrop's Journal, pp. 91, 92. [Vol. I, pp. 175, 176.]

<sup>3</sup>Massachusetts Historical Collections Vol. I, p. 276.

far from seeking any revenge upon those who banished him, that, at the hazard of his life, he went into Narragansett, and prevented the Indians there from joining with the Pequods, who were for driving all the English out of the country, when Boston was not seven years old. And any man who will read the books referred to in the margin, may see that Williams was a chief instrument of saving all the English then in New England, from ruin; though ministerial influence was so great in the Massachusetts as to exclude him from liberty of coming into their government all his days. But the very year after Williams died in peace, the Massachusetts charter was taken away, and the king of England claimed all their lands, and his governor and council made laws, and imposed taxes upon them, without any house of representatives, and introduced the taxes upon commerce, which finally brought on the late war. Mr. Williams, having obtained a deed of the lands in Providence, gave twelve men an equal right therein with himself, and he drew a covenant of such a government in the town in civil affairs, as excluded them from governing in religious matters. And because Joshua Verin refused to allow liberty of conscience to his wife, he was excluded from the privilege of voting in the town, until he granted that liberty. Upon this Verin removed to Barbadoes, and left his estate in Providence.<sup>1</sup> As Williams and a number of his friends were convinced that professing believers were the only gospel subjects of baptism, they formed a Baptist church in Providence, in March, 1639, when one of them baptized him, and then he baptized the rest.<sup>2</sup> But the unruly passions of some among them, with other things, caused such scruples in Williams's mind, in about four months, that he refrained from administering or partaking of special ordinances in any church ever after, as long as he lived, though he would preach the gospel, and join in social worship with such as agreed with him, all his days. The reasons of this conduct may be seen in our first volume, pp. 118, 119. He went to England in 1643, and published an account of the Indians, of their language, and of his labors to instruct them concerning Christianity, which the Historical Society at Boston have lately reprinted. He procured a charter for his colony the next year, and went to England again to defend it in 1651, where he stayed until 1654, when he returned, and was elected their chief ruler for near three years; and all his life after was spent in seeking the good of his country, until he died in the spring of 1683.

Mr. Thomas Olney, who had been a member of the Congregational church in Salem, but left them, and came to Providence in 1638, was the next pastor of this Baptist church, and was also useful in civil offices, until his death in 1682. But a division arose in this church in 1652, about lay-

<sup>1</sup>In Winthrop's Journal he is called Urdin, p. 167. [Vol. I, p. 283.] But it is Verin in Providence Records.

<sup>2</sup>Winthrop, p. 174. [Vol. I, p. 293.]

ing on of hands upon every member of the church after baptism.<sup>1</sup> Ten years before, the Baptists in England had adopted the opinion, that every man who had a gift given him to preach the gospel, had also a right to baptize, even before he was ordained in any church; which opinion was held by some men of note in Providence for eighty years after. Mr. William Wickenden was a chief leader in that part of the church in Providence who held to the laying on of hands upon each member, which they supposed to be intended in the sixth chapter of the Hebrews; and he was an esteemed minister therein, until he died, February 23, 1669. Gregory Dexter was President of this colony in 1653, and he was very useful in government, and a father in this church, and lived to be ninety-one years old. Pardon Tillinghast was "a leading man among the Baptists in Providence," in 1672;<sup>2</sup> and he was much esteemed as a minister among them, until his death, in 1718. He gave the lot upon which their first meeting-house was built. Chad Brown was an early member of this church, and he is said to have been a teacher among them. And his son John Brown was a minister in this church, as well as a useful man in the State. And his son James Brown was a pastor of this church for many years, and died October 28, 1732, aged sixty-six. His son James had four sons, three of whom have been at great expense towards the college in Providence, and towards the Baptist meeting-house there, as well as the support of worship in that society.<sup>3</sup> Joseph Jencks came over from England, about the time that Charles the Second came to the throne, and settled in Providence, and was a useful man in his day; and his son Joseph was a magistrate, Deputy Governor, and then chief Governor of this colony; as well as a leading member in this church, and lived to be above ninety. His brother Ebenezer Jencks was ordained a pastor of this church in 1719, and continued so until his death, August 14, 1726, aged fifty-seven. His son Daniel Jencks, and grandson John Jencks, were both members of this church, and were employed in several offices in the government, and also gave very liberally towards the college, and for the support of the Baptist cause in Providence. Deacon Samuel Winsor was ordained a pastor of this church in 1733, and continued in that office until he died, November 17, 1758, aged seventy-one. His son Samuel Winsor was ordained his successor, and continued with this church until after President Manning came to Providence, and then, in 1771, he, with a number more of the church, went and formed another church in Johnston, where he yet is minister. Mr. Thomas Burlingham was also ordained in this church in 1733; but he preached the latter part of his time in Cranston, where he died January 7,

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 405; Vol. II, p. 22; Manning and Brown University, pp. 149, 153; Hague's Historical Discourse, p. 103.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Williams's Dispute with the Quakers, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup>See Manning and Brown University, pp. 143—176.—Ed.



1770, aged eighty-two. After Elder Winsor and his brethren had formed their church in Johnston,<sup>1</sup> this church in Providence sent a committee to treat with them about their right in their old meeting-house, and they agreed to take two hundred dollars, which was given them accordingly. This summary has been collected from the best light that could be obtained, for no regular records have been found in this church before the year 1770.

James Manning, D. D., was born at Elizabethtown, in New Jersey, October 22, 1738; was early changed by grace, and joined the Baptist church in the town where he was born. His education, and his service in the college, have been described before, but we shall speak more of him as a minister of the gospel. He was called to that work, and was ordained as an itinerant minister, by the church where he was baptized; and he removed to Warren in the summer of 1764, and a Baptist church was formed there the 15th of October following, and he became their pastor. But when the college was removed to Providence, in the spring of 1770, he went with it, and was frequently invited to preach in the Baptist church there, until Elder Winsor, and a part of the church, drew off in the summer of 1771, and formed another church in Johnston, and then Elder Manning was chosen to preach and administer ordinances to this church in Providence; and he continued so to do, until he resigned that office in the spring of 1786, although he ministered to them occasionally afterwards as long as he lived. And though his powers of mind and human accomplishments were very great, yet he used great plainness of speech, and was as easily understood by common people, as almost any preacher in the land. And few men ever prized the special influence of the Spirit of God in preaching, more than he did. He was at the Philadelphia Association in October, 1774, where he met with Mr. Daniel Fristoe, from Virginia, whom he heard afterwards, with such clearness, life, and power, though not a man of liberal education, as fired his soul with fresh zeal and courage in preaching salvation to perishing souls; and Mr. Manning labored with such faithfulness and success, after his return to Providence, that he baptized a hundred and ten persons by September, 1775; and a large number more joined Mr. Snow's church, even notwithstanding the confusions of war which then broke out in our land. And when Governor Cooke was chosen member of the college corporation, and some scrupled whether he could properly be denominated a Baptist, because he was a member of a Congregational church, he informed them that he was ever a Baptist in principle, and was baptized by immersion, and should have joined the Baptist church in Providence, if such doctrine

<sup>1</sup>Elder Winsor was a rigid Six Principle Baptist, and was opposed to singing in public worship. He, and a party with him, withdrew because the church fellowshiped President Manning, who did not sympathize with him in these views. See Hague's Historical Discourse, pp. 105, 106; Manning and Brown University, pp. 178, 179.—ED.

had been preached therein then as there was now. President Manning made it his constant practice, to charge his scholars, when they left the college, not to imagine that they were qualified to preach the gospel, until they were satisfied that they were taught of God. At the Commencement in September, 1789, he said :—

Should the Christian ministry, with any of you, become an object, reflect on the absurdity of intruding into it while strangers to experimental religion. See that you yourselves have been taught of God, before you attempt to teach godliness to others. To place in the professional chairs of our universities the most illiterate of mankind, would be an absurdity far less glaring, than to call an unconverted man to exercise the ministerial function. This is to expose our holy religion to the scoffs of infidels, and furnish to their hands the most deadly weapons. I omit to insist on the account such must render in the great, tremendous day.

And his constant behavior was agreeable to his teaching ; and he united dignity and condescension, authority and mildness, in such a manner as to be feared and loved by the generality of his scholars. He married a daughter of John Sitts, an alderman of Elizabethtown, and a useful member of the Baptist church there ; and she met with a happy change, and joined the Baptist church in Providence, in January, 1775, of which she is still an agreeable member. She has no children. Dr. Manning died in a fit of the apoplexy, July 29, 1791, when he, undoubtedly, entered into eternal rest.<sup>1</sup>

The opinion of laying on of hands upon every member in the church, had long made a separation among the Baptist churches in this land ; but soon after Dr. Manning came to Providence, he prevailed with this church to admit other Baptists to occasional communion with them, though they would receive none as members until after his death. But on August 4, 1791, the church had a full meeting, and this point was distinctly considered, and a clear vote was gained to admit members who did not hold that doctrine. At the same meeting the church concluded to have another pastor ordained therein, namely, Jonathan Maxcy, A. M. He was born in

<sup>1</sup>The life of President Manning was one of eminent service, alike to the college over which he presided with marked ability for the first twenty-six years of its existence, securing to it a character from the beginning from which its subsequent honorable history has largely sprung,—to the First Baptist church in Providence, of which he was the pastor for years, and which by his discipline was brought to far greater purity of doctrine and practice, and was largely increased in numbers,—to the Baptist denomination, with which he identified himself in all its interests,—and to the whole country, which is to no small extent indebted to him for the blessing of religious liberty. No one deserves a more extended notice than he, in a history of early New England Baptists. It is well, however, that the need of an extended notice here is obviated by the frequent mention of his services in previous pages, and by the full and valuable memoir, entitled “Manning and Brown University,” from the pen of R. A. Guild, the University Librarian.—Ed.

Attleborough, September 2, 1768, educated in the college at Providence, where he took his first degree in 1787, and was a tutor in the college, until he met with a change in October, 1789, and joined to this church, in which he began to preach in April, 1790, and was ordained their pastor, September 8, 1791. Mr. John Pitman, who was born in Boston, and had been a minister some years at Freehold, in New Jersey, removed to Providence, and he and his wife were now the first members who were received into this church, without holding to the laying on of hands upon every member. He has frequently preached the gospel in various places ever since, without taking the pastoral charge of any particular church. Thomas Ustick, A. M., took his first degree in the college at Providence in 1771, was ordained in this church as an itinerant minister, July 29, 1777, preached a while at Ashford, from whence he removed to Grafton in May, 1779, and then to Philadelphia in June, 1782, where he has been pastor of the Baptist church in that city ever since. A powerful work of grace came on in Providence in the beginning of 1790, which caused the addition of above fifty members to this church in about two years. September 6, 1792, Mr. Maxcy was chosen President of the college, *pro tempore*, and he has been continued in that office ever since. He resigned his pastoral office in this church two days after he was first elected President, and they immediately called Mr. Stephen Gano to be their minister for six months, and he has been so ever since. He was ordained before in the State of New York. Mr. John Gano, his father, was a minister in the city of New York before the late war, but he is now in Kentucky; and he has been the most extensive traveller to preach the gospel, of any man now living in America. Forty-six members have been added to this church in Providence, since Mr. Stephen Gano came there. He drew the circular letter for the Warren Association in 1795.

The corporation of the college at Providence consists of twelve Fellows, and thirty-six Trustees. The Fellows, as a learned faculty, have the power of conferring the degrees, but in other affairs the college is governed by the concurrence of both branches. The President is always to be a Baptist, and so are seven more of the Fellows, while the other four may be chosen out of any of the other denominations. Twenty-two of the Trustees are also to be Baptists, five of them are to be Episcopalians, five Quakers, and four Congregationalists. The Chancellor is chosen out of the Trustees, and the Secretary out of the Fellows. No religious test is ever to be required of any of the corporation, nor of the scholars who are graduated therein; though great care is to be taken as to the morals of the college. Their first funds were collected by Mr. Morgan Edwards, in England and Ireland, and by Mr. Hezekiah Smith in South Carolina and Georgia; to which additions have been since made from various quarters, but all by personal generosity. These moneys were chiefly lent to Rhode



Island government, though some have been put into a national bank ; but the interest thereof, with the income from the students, who are near eighty, is scantily sufficient to support the officers of the college.<sup>1</sup> The building and repairing of the college edifice, the President's house, with the purchase of the lands about them, and also the college library and apparatus, were all done by personal benefactions, and chiefly in the town of Providence. And so was the Baptist meeting-house, bell and clock, with the lot on which it stands, all which cost about seven thousand pounds.<sup>2</sup> They first met in said house, May 28, 1775. How false then are the pretences of many, that religion and learning would fail from among us if they were not upheld by the power of the magistrate ! It is readily granted that there has been much religion and knowledge among those who have gone on in that way ; but the light and power of the gospel is directly against all deceit or violence. And God says of his church, In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees ; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. Isaiah xxv. 6, 7. A covering and appearance of religion have been kept up by the power of the magistrate, which the feast of the gospel, in the church of Christ, will destroy.

Ever since the reformation in Germany, many have cast the reproach of all the evils which have appeared among the Baptists upon that denomination in general ; which is as unjust as it would be for others to charge all the evils that ever were in national churches, upon all men who hold to infant baptism. But abusive treatment on either side is exceedingly apt to beget prejudices in the mind against good principles and conduct, which are held by their opposites. And as Calvinism was held by those who banished the first planters of Providence and of Rhode Island colony, and who greatly abused those people all their days, many of their children have imagined that the true liberty of moral agents could not be secured upon that plan of doctrine. Though it is abundantly evident, that Mr. Williams, who procured the first charter, and Mr. Clarke, who procured the second, for this colony of liberty, held to that plan of doctrine as firmly as any men in

<sup>1</sup>In 1795, they had given degrees to three hundred and eighty scholars who were educated in this college.

<sup>2</sup>The Baptist meeting-house in Providence, built "for the public worship of Almighty God, and also for holding Commencements in," with steeple, "bell and clock," was justly the pride of early New England Baptists. In beauty, size, and costliness, it far surpassed any other Baptist meeting-house in the colonies. It was eighty feet square ; while Dr. Stillman, in Boston, was preaching in a house fifty-seven by fifty-three. A representation of it was engraved for the Massachusetts Magazine, and for Rippon's Register, and, as Dr. Rippon wrote, created astonishment among English Baptists. See Manning and Brown University, pp. 225—230, 440 ; History of Brown University, pp. 248—253.—ED.

their day. And how can any man enjoy comfort and liberty in his soul, in the midst of the confusions of the world, without believing that men nor devils can never deceive their faithful God, nor defeat any of his designs? That he never makes use of any positive influence to move men to sin, or to hinder their coming to Christ, I as firmly believe as I believe he is just and good; but the lusts of men are so powerful, and the wiles of the devil are so many, that no man can overcome them of himself; though the Spirit of God makes every true believer a conqueror over them all. But as a separation among the Baptists in the last century, was followed with a departure from these sentiments, and their churches have not been in fellowship with most of the Baptist churches lately gathered in this land, I shall say but little about them, more than to mention where they are, and who have been their ministers. Mr. Samuel Fisk was ordained the pastor of a Baptist church in Scituate, and continued with them to old age; but I have not obtained the date of his ordination, nor of his death, though he was one of their Association in 1729.<sup>1</sup> Elder Reuben Hopkins was their last minister, who died in January, 1792. Elder Peter Place was in their church in Smithfield in 1731, where now is Elder John Winsor. Elder Edward Mitchel was in their church in Gloster for many years, and he died, October 22, 1795, aged ninety-eight. Elder William Bowen was a colleague with him, and now succeeds him. Elder Cooke was in their church in Cumberland, where now is Elder Ballou. I suppose the rest of the churches in their connection in that county have had but one minister, and their names, with the number of their members, are given before, taken from Asplund's Register for 1794.

A few people in Gloster met with a change about the time of the separations in Connecticut, and Thomas Knowlton from thence was at the Separate ordination in Plainfield, September 11, 1746. A Baptist church was afterwards formed in Gloster, and he was their minister for a number of years. After his death, they had other preachers, until Mr. Joseph Winsor (brother to Samuel) was ordained their pastor, October 31, 1763; and they prospered for a number of years under his ministry, and had seventy-nine members when they joined the Warren Association, in 1782, and had some increase afterwards. But, as many have removed into other parts of the country, and their pastor is so aged as not to be able to preach, their number is much reduced, as I am informed, though I have not their present number. A Baptist church was formed in North Providence, and Mr. Ezekiel Angell was ordained their pastor, June 20, 1765; and he continued so until his death, September 27, 1782, aged sixty. Mr. Rufus Tefft, who was born March 14, 1752, was ordained their second pastor, June 16, 1784. There were but nineteen members in this church when their former pastor died, but a great revival began in the fall of 1791, and prevailed much in the east part of Smithfield, as well as in this town, and

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, p. 521.

their number last June, when I was there, was a hundred and seventy. Many of these had been brought up in a careless neglect of all religion; but we hope that their future life may be as becometh the gospel. Mr. John Hammond was baptized in 1780, began to gather a church in the town of Foster, in February, 1789, in which he was ordained in June, 1791, and they increased to about ninety members in three years. There was a second Baptist church in Cumberland above thirty years ago, but they were much broken and scattered for some years; though there have been revivals since, and especially within a few years past. A Baptist church was formed in Cranston, and Mr. Elisha Greene was ordained their pastor, July 30, 1764. He was born in Warwick, August 5, 1698, baptized in 1717, began to preach in 1741, and, after a useful life, died in Gloster, October 29, 1780. This church is now very small. There is another meeting-house in Cranston, upon the great road to Warwick, where Mr. Pitman often preaches, and a number of members from thence have joined the Baptist church in Providence.

#### COUNTY OF NEWPORT.

Mr. John Clarke, a physician from London, was one of the first planters of Rhode Island, and the pastor of the second Baptist church in America, which was formed at Newport in 1644. His brother, Joseph Clarke was a member of it, and often a ruler in the State, and adorned his profession for above forty years after the church was constituted; and his posterity are numerous and respectable unto this day. Samuel Hubbard was born in England in 1610, came over to Salem in 1633, joined to the Congregational church in Watertown in 1635, but went up to Windsor, and helped to begin the colony of Connecticut the same year. But as he and his wife embraced the Baptist principles, they removed to Newport, and joined with this church in 1648; and he lived there above forty years after, and preserved many writings which have been very serviceable in our history. He left no son, but he had three daughters, who were married to Joseph Clarke, junior, Robert Burdick, and Andrew Langworthy, whose posterity are respectable to this day, especially among the Baptists in Hopkinton. In 1651 Mr. Coddington obtained a commission from the ruling powers in England, to be governor of Rhode Island, without the consent of the people, when he had the deeds of their lands in his hands. Therefore Mr. John Clarke went to England, with Mr. Roger Williams, and got that commission disannulled; and he was agent for his colony in that country, until he procured their second charter in 1663. Mr. Hubbard wrote a letter to him, the spring after he went to England, and Clarke wrote him an answer, October 11, 1652, and said:—

There can be nothing in the present evil world, so far as I am acquainted with my own heart as it stands to Godward, that is more pleasing and de-



lightful to it, than the manifestation of the enlargement of the kingdom of his dear Son, and that many obedient servants are added to the Lord, whom God the Father has resolved to exalt above every name that is named, not only in this present world, but in that which is to come ; and that they who are so added, being living members of that body which by a spirit of life is joined unto that living Lord who is head over all, may increase with all the increase of God, is the earnest desire and prayer of my soul. But I must tell you, that as the promise of the glorious coming of our Lord doth quicken and freshen in my heart, so doth that prophecy follow in my mind, When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

He returned to Newport in 1664, and was a faithful pastor of this church, being also useful in the State, until he died in a happy frame, April 20, 1676. When Mr. Clarke sailed for England in 1651, he left the care of this church with Joseph Tory, and Obadiah Holmes, and they were useful teachers therein all their days. Holmes succeeded Clarke as pastor of the church, until he died, October 15, 1682. Mr. Richard Dingley succeeded him ; but in 1694, he left them and went to South Carolina. In 1710 Mr. William Peckom was ordained their pastor, and continued so until he died in 1734. He was esteemed as a pious man, but his gifts were small ; and Mr. John Comer was ordained a colleague with him, May 19, 1726. He was born in Boston, August 1, 1704, met with a happy change in November, 1721, and after obtaining a good share of human learning, he began to preach the gospel at Swansea in May, 1724, and went to Newport in the fall of 1725, and preached in this church four years, in which time it increased from seventeen members to fifty-two. Yet two powerful men in the church prevailed with the majority to vote him a dismission in 1729, and he went and preached two years in the Second church in Newport with considerable success, and then removed and gathered the First Baptist church in Rehoboth, where he died, as we before noted. Mr. John Calender, who was born in Boston, and was educated at the college in Cambridge, was the next pastor of this church, where he was ordained, October 13, 1731, colleague with Elder Peckom. He was a man of superior powers, and published a Century Sermon in 1738, and a Funeral Sermon for Mr. Clap, the first Congregational minister in Newport, in 1745, with some other things. He also collected many papers, which have been serviceable in our history. But he was taken away by death, January 26, 1748, in the forty-second year of his age. Mr. Edward Upham, of Springfield, at the request of this church, removed to Newport in 1749, and ministered to them until April, 1771, when he returned back to Springfield, as we before related. Mr. Erasmus Kelly, who was born in Pennsylvania, July 24, 1748, educated at the college in Philadelphia, and began to preach in those parts, was called to Newport, and was ordained a pastor of this church, October 9, 1771. And the church and society increased under his ministry, until the enemy came to Newport, and he removed to Warren,

where they followed him, and burnt the house and goods where he resided, May 25, 1778. He then removed to Connecticut, and from thence to Pennsylvania. But upon the return of peace, he came again to Newport, and ministered to this church, until he was taken away by death, November 7, 1784, before he had been with them a year in this last turn. Mr. Josias Lyndon was of this society, and did much for the support of worship therein. He was governor of the colony in 1769, and was very serviceable in the State all his days. He died of the small pox, March 30, 1778, aged seventy-four, leaving much of his estate to this church. The calamities of the war scattered this church, and others were taken away by death, so that only three male members remained at Newport, and but twenty-seven, male and female, remained anywhere, when Dr. Benjamin Foster came there in January, 1785, and above twenty were added to this church that year, and many to their society, a number of whom attended no worship before. In September, 1786, this church was received into the Warren Association, when they had sixty-nine members. But in 1788 some of them raised opposition against their minister, and he had an earnest call to New York; therefore he was dismissed from this church, and has been pastor of the First Baptist church in that city ever since. After various trials, this church obtained Mr. Michael Eddy, who was ordained in Swansea, in 1785, but removed to Newport in January, 1790, and he is now their pastor, and they have prospered under his ministry.

The doctrine of laying on of hands upon every member, came into the First church in Newport in 1652, and the Second church was formed about 1656. Mr. William Vaughan was their first pastor, and continued so until his death in August, 1677. Mr. Thomas Baker succeeded him for a time, and then he removed and began a society in North Kingstown. Mr. John Harden was their third pastor, who died in the year 1700. Mr. James Clarke was the next, who was ordained in 1701, and continued with them until he died, December 1, 1736, aged eighty-seven. Mr. Daniel Wightman was ordained a colleague with him in 1704. He was born in Narragansett, January 2, 1668, and died in Newport, August 31, 1750. They were well esteemed among their brethren, as faithful ministers, and exemplary walkers; and in January, 1729, when Elder Clarke was not able to preach, through the infirmities of age, Mr. Comer was received to preach one half of the Lord's days with Elder Wightman, and continued to do so for two years. Their church increased to a hundred and forty-two members, being the largest church then in their colony. They had built the first meeting-house in the colony, in 1707. On June 21, 1729, they had the largest Association of Baptist ministers and churches that ever had been seen in America. The elders present were, James Clarke, Daniel Wightman, and John Comer, of Newport, Jonathan Sprague and James Brown, of Providence, Nicholas Eyers, of New York, Valentine Wight-

man, of Groton, Philip Tabor, of Dartmouth, Stephen Gorton, of New London, and Daniel Everett, of South Kingstown. Beside whom, the elders, Peter Place, of Smithfield, Samuel Fisk, of Scituate, Joseph Mason, of Swansea, Manassah Martin, of Warwick, and Richard Sweet, of North Kingstown, were in their connection of churches; and Mr. Comer says, "Each of these holds to general redemption. Three other churches hold to the doctrine of free grace. One in Newport, formerly my flock; one at Swansea, Mr. Ephraim Wheaton; one at Boston, Mr. Elisha Callender." And these, with one at Newport, and one at Westerly, who kept the seventh day, were all the Baptist churches then in New England. Comer gave his ideas of election in these words, saying, "If God does not choose us, we shall never be moved to choose him. It is from his choice of us that we are led to choose him. I Pet. ii. 9; II Thess. ii. 13. They are chosen to obedience, and not for obedience. I Pet. i. 2. We are chosen not in time upon works, but before time exclusive. Eph. i. 4. All is rich, sovereign, free and pure grace in God through Christ."<sup>1</sup> But as some would not hear him preach that doctrine there, he removed to Rehoboth, and Elder Nicholas Eyers came to Newport in October, 1731, and was a pastor of this church until his death, February 13, 1759. He was born in England, August 22, 1691, educated in the city of Bristol, came over to New York about 1711, was baptized and ordained there in 1724, but his church broke up in 1730, and he had great influence among these churches as long as he lived, and he left many manuscripts, some of which have been serviceable in our history. His son, Dr. Thomas Eyres, was educated at Yale College, and was one of the first Fellows of our college. Mr. Gardner Thurston was born in Newport, November 21, 1721, met with a change and joined this church in 1741, and was ordained their pastor, April 29, 1759. The doctrines of grace gradually gained ground in this church, and singing in public worship was introduced into it in 1765, and many blessings have been granted among them since. Dr. William Rogers, one of the first class in our college, was called to preach in this church, and he went to Philadelphia in 1771, where he has been useful ever since. Elder Burroughs, of Tiverton, and Elder Jones, of Rehoboth, sprang also from this church. Their pastor continued with them through all the calamities of the war, and is still useful to old age.

The Third Baptist church in Newport was formed in the following manner:—Stephen Mumford came over from London in 1664,<sup>2</sup> and brought the opinion with him, that the whole of the ten commandments, as they were delivered from Mount Sinai, were moral and immutable; and that it

<sup>1</sup>Comer's Diary.

<sup>2</sup>In Vol. I, p. 324, this date is given as "in the beginning of 1665." The discrepancy may be accounted for by supposing that, in the present instance, Backus neglected to reduce the date to new style.—Ed.



was the antichristian power, which thought to change times and laws, that changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. Several members of the First church in Newport embraced this sentiment, and yet continued with the church for some years, until two men and their wives who had so done, turned back to the keeping of the first day again. But they who believed that this practice came from antichrist, were much concerned about it, and wrote to their friends in England for advice thereon. An answer was returned from London, and another from Mr. Edward Stennett, of Abington, March 6, 1670, who said:—

My dear friends, as for those that have drawn back from the Sabbath to profaneness, after light and establishment therein, yourselves must not take pleasure in them, but must withdraw yourselves from them, as sinful and disorderly persons; and if the church will hold communion with those apostates from the truth, you ought then to desire to be fairly dismissed from the church, which if the church refuse, you ought to withdraw yourselves, and not be partakers of other men's sins, but keep yourselves pure, but with all humility, meekness, and brokenness of heart.

This brought on warm debates on both sides, and finally a separation took place, in December, 1671, when William Hiscox, Samuel Hubbard, Stephen Mumford, Roger Baster, and three sisters, joined in covenant as a distinct church. Mr. Hubbard wrote to their brethren in London, October 3, 1672, and said, "Dear brethren, pray for us, a poor, weak band in a wilderness, beset round with opposites, from the common adversary, and from Quakers, generals and profane persons, and most of all from such as have been our familiar acquaintance: but our battles are only in words, praised be God."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hiscox was pastor of this church until he died,

<sup>1</sup>If the following things are considered, it may prevent divisions among Christians upon this article. That God is Lord of all our time is a moral and immutable truth, but the sanctification of a particular day was never known to man without a positive precept. It does not appear that Israel knew anything about the Sabbath of the seventh day, until after they came into the wilderness, when it was said to them, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord. And he afterwards said, It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed. Ex. xvi. 23; xxxi. 17. And every man in Israel who broke the Sabbath, was to be stoned to death. Numb. xv. 35. But when Christ came, he said to the Jews, The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day. Matt. xii. 8. And after his ascension to heaven, an inspired apostle said, He also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Heb. iv. 10. Christ our passover was sacrificed for us on the sixth day of the week, and the next day was the Sabbath, and fifty days from thence was the first day of the week, when the Holy Ghost was given, and three thousand souls were converted, as the first fruits of the death of Christ. Levit. xxiii. 5, 15, 16; Acts ii. 1—41. And how often is the first day of the week spoken of under the gospel! Matt. xxviii. 1—7; Mark xv. 2; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1, 19, 26; Acts xx. 7. And as contributions to the saints are sacrifices to God, he commands them to be provided on the first day of the week. I Cor. xvi. 1, 2; Phil. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 16. And the glory of the ministration which was written and engraven in stones, is

May 24, 1704, aged sixty-six. Mr. William Gibson, who came from London, was their second pastor, until he died, March 12, 1717, aged seventy-nine. Mr. Joseph Crandal had been a colleague with him for two years, and he continued in that office until he was taken away by death, September 13, 1737. Mr. John Maxon was their next pastor, from 1754 unto March 2, 1778, when he died. Mr. Ebenezer David, from Philadelphia, was converted while in the college at Providence, where he took his first degree in 1772, and he was called to preach the gospel the next year by this church with their brethren at Hopkinton; and he was a chaplain in the American army, much esteemed, until he died in Pennsylvania, March 19, 1778. Thomas Ward was an early member of this church, whose son Richard was governor of the colony in 1741, 1742; and his son Samuel was governor in 1762 and 1765, and a member of Congress in 1774 and 1775, until he died at Philadelphia, March 26, 1776, aged fifty-two. All of these were members of this church. Mr. William Bliss was called to preach the gospel by this church before the American war, and he continued with them through the war, and preached frequently on the island when the British forces were there, from whom he suffered much. He was ordained as an evangelist, December 11, 1779, and was installed as pastor of this church, December 24, 1780. And he is so well esteemed by the Congregational ministers in Newport, as to be frequently called to supply their pulpits when they go journeys into the country.

There have been a number of Baptists in Newport for many years, who did not agree fully with either of the old churches in some things, but chose to meet by themselves, and to call elders from abroad to minister occasionally to them, until they formed another church in the town. They carried the liberty for every brother to improve his gifts in public worship, beyond what the other churches did; and though a motion was lately made to have two of their most gifted brethren ordained, yet the matter was deferred for further consideration. However, we are well informed, that a greater harmony has lately appeared among all denominations in Newport, than was heretofore known among them.

Elder Philip Tabor was pastor of the Baptist church in Tiverton and Dartmouth, before he was imprisoned at Bristol for not favoring ministerial tyranny. Both of these towns were under the Massachusetts government until 1741; and because the majority of the inhabitants would not receive and support Congregational ministers, a salary for such was put into their State tax, and they were to draw it out of the State treasury. But their assessors being informed of it, left that part of the tax on those two towns out of their assessment. Tabor was one of them, and he, with three

done away under the New Testament. II Cor. iii. 6—8. But the Lord's day is ever to be regarded. Rev. i. 10. Though he who does not regard it to the Lord, does not regard it at all. Rom. xiv. 6.

asseessors more, were seized on May 25, 1723, and were imprisoned at Bristol until an agent went over to London, and procured their release by an order from the king and council.<sup>1</sup> He lived within the bounds of Dartmouth, but their meeting was held in the east part of Tiverton, where he ministered to this Baptist church, until he died in November, 1752. Mr. David Round was born in Rehoboth, in January, 1706, and was ordained the next pastor of this church about 1755, and ministered to them for many years, and is now living among them, and esteemed as a pious man. But as his gifts were small, the church called Mr. Peleg Burroughs, from the Second church in Newport, to preach to them in May, 1775, and he was ordained their pastor, April 13, 1780. A happy rain of righteousness was then granted among them, which caused the addition of about a hundred members in two years. Elder Burroughs was born in Newport, June 5, 1748, converted in 1766, and began to preach in 1774; and he is still continued with this church. That revival of religion caused the gathering of a Baptist church in the south borders of Freetown, February 15, 1781, and Mr. Amos Burris, from Groton, in Connecticut, was installed their pastor, May 22, 1783. But in October, 1784, he removed into the State of Vermont, and they removed their meeting into the north borders of Tiverton, where it now is;<sup>2</sup> and two men were raised up to preach among them, who were unitedly ordained as their pastors, May 19, 1795, namely, James Boomer and Job Borden. The latter is blind, as to natural sight, but he has such spiritual light as to be esteemed a clear preacher of the gospel. A Baptist church was formed in New Shoreham, on Block Island, and Mr. Thomas Dodge was ordained their pastor in 1784.

#### COUNTY OF BRISTOL.

Though the charter of Rhode Island colony, which Mr Clarke obtained in 1663, plainly included the lands which now are in the towns of Bristol, Barrington and Warren, as well as two more towns which are in the county of Newport and one in the county of Providence, yet the Massachusetts held them until the year 1741; since that time, the three towns first named, form the county of Bristol, in this State. Warren was a part of the town of Swansea, and a number of the members of the first church there were formed into a church in Warren, October 15, 1764, and Dr. Manning was their minister until he removed to Providence in 1770, as we before observed. After some time, this church obtained Mr. Charles Thompson to preach to them, and he was ordained their pastor, July 3, 1771. He was born at Amwell, in New Jersey, April 14, 1748, was one of the first gradu-

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 500—506.

<sup>2</sup>For several years this church held meetings in Fall River, till, in 1825, its meetings in Tiverton were discontinued, and the church became the First Baptist church in Fall River. Manuscript Sketch of the Church, by Rev. A. Bronson.—ED.



ates in our college at Warren, in 1769 ; and such a blessing was granted on his ministry there as to increase the church from fifty to eighty-three members in four years. But when the war came on, it had many pernicious effects ; and the enemy came up to Warren and burnt their meeting-house and their house for the ministry, May 25, 1778, and carried Mr. Thompson away as a prisoner, and confined him in a guard-ship at Newport. After his deliverance was obtained, he went up into Connecticut and preached in several places, and then was called and settled at Swansea in 1779, as was before related. The burnings and destructions which were made by the British forces at Warren prevented their erecting another house for worship for many years ; neither could they unite in settling another pastor until lately. Mr. Luther Baker was raised up among them, and he was ordained their minister, October 17, 1793, and it is hoped that he may be useful to them for many years to come.

#### COUNTY OF WASHINGTON.

As there is no settled minister who holds to infant baptism, in any part of this State west of Newport and Providence, it may be proper to inquire into the reasons of it. A leading cause of it appears to be the sufferings of many of their fathers from Pædobaptists. After Samuel Gorton and his friends had purchased the lands in Warwick of Indian Sachems, they were seized and carried to Boston by an armed force, in the fall of 1643, and were confined in those parts all winter, and then were banished upon pain of death, not only out of the Massachusetts colony, but also from their own lands. And Captain Edward Johnson, who was one of the officers that carried them away, published the views they had in these proceedings, in a history which was printed in London in 1654. He represents it as the command of Christ to them, that they should subdue all his enemies in this country, as Israel did the heathen in Canaan. And he says :—

Fail not in prosecution of the work, for our [your] Lord Christ hath furnished you with able pilots, to steer the helm in a godly, peaceable, civil government [also] ; then see that you make choice of such as are sound, both in profession and confession, men fearing God and hating bribes ; whose commission is not [only] limited with the commands of the second table, but they are to look to the rules of the first table also. And let them be sure to put on Joshua's resolution and courage, never to make a league with any of these seven sectaries. 1. The *Gortonists*, who deny the humanity of Christ, and most blasphemously and proudly profess themselves to be personally Christ. 2. The *Papists*, who with (almost) equal blasphemy and pride, prefer their own merits and works of supererogation as equal with Christ's invaluable death and sufferings. 3. The *Familists*, who depend upon rare revelations, and forsake the sure revealed word of Christ. 4. *Seekers*, who deny the churches and ordinances of Christ. 5. *Antinomians*, who deny the moral law to be the rule of Christ. 6. *Anabaptists*, who deny civil government to be proved of Christ. 7. The *Pre-*

*lacy*, who will have their own injunctions submitted unto in the church [churches] of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

But Gorton and some of his friends went over to England, and procured an order from thence, for them to enjoy the lands which they had purchased. And as he actually held, that what we read about the coming, death and resurrection of Christ, is to be understood mystically, and not literally, he taught his followers in that way, and fixed lasting prejudices in their minds against all church government, as well as against tyranny under religious pretences. And many of their posterity neglect public worship even to our times.<sup>2</sup> The sufferings of the Quakers also, who came to America after Johnson's History was published, filled many with great dislike to the ruling denomination in the Massachusetts. To which we may add, that no communities who held to infant baptism, ever prevailed much without the sword of the magistrate to uphold them, or oppression to drive them together. Neither have Baptist churches prospered much without the power of the Spirit of God among them.

The first Baptist church in the county of Washington was in North Kingstown. Elder Baker went from Newport, and began a meeting there towards the close of the last century, as Mr. Comer informs us; and a paper of their own, dates the beginning of their church about 1710. Mr. Richard Sweet was their pastor for many years, and lived till after 1740. Mr. David Sprague was ordained a colleague with him about 1739. The great awakenings in other parts of the country, in and after 1741, affected a number of people in these parts, which caused various controversies. The laying on of hands upon every member had been carried so far, as not to allow their members to hear any others pray or preach. And when Mr. Bound, of Boston, met Elder Wightman, of Groton, at Warwick, in 1743, the elders with whom he was connected opposed his acting in the ordination; and Mr. John Callender, of Newport, wrote an unfavorable account of it to England, and also of the work then going on in the land, and said, "I have seen no cause to alter the opinion I early entertained of Mr. Whitefield, that he was a second George Fox." But all experience since has evidenced his great mistake. For the plan of doctrine which Whitefield held forth was directly opposite to that which Fox taught, and he ever appeared against the idea of raising any new sect in the world, and exerted all his powers to revive pure religion, according to the Holy Scriptures, among all sorts of people wherever he came, and left the government of churches to others. But Mr. Wesley and his followers have been exceed-

<sup>1</sup>Johnson's History, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>A sensible man in Cranston, by particular request, took an account of all the inhabitants of that town in 1774, and he found thirty-eight families who attended no religious meeting at all, nor their fathers before them. These sprang from the first planters of Warwick.

ingly zealous for the doctrines which Fox held, and to raise a new sect under another name. The work which began in the year 1740, naturally caused opposition to arise in all who were settled down in formality, of every denomination. And the general meeting of the Baptist churches at Newport, September 11, 1749, sent an address to their brethren, in which they said :—

We have endeavored to promote and maintain general peace and unity among the brotherhood, and have not been altogether unsuccessful ; and we heartily desire that the fruits and effects of our endeavors may diffuse and spread themselves abroad in other places, and throughout the churches. And though we should have been glad to have had the company and assistance of more of our ministers and brethren, to carry on and encourage the great work of our Redeemer's kingdom ; yet we who are assembled in our General Meeting, according to our general character, do take courage in the Lord to consider by what means the general interest and peace of the churches might be promoted, and grieve at any measures or steps that were or had been taken, by which the same were lessened and impaired. This gave us occasion to consider the sad dissensions and divisions which seem to be carrying on in several churches ; more especially at South Kingstown, North Kingstown, Warwick, Greenwich, &c.

This was signed by Daniel Wightman, Philip Tabor, Nicholas Eyers, Samuel Winsor, Job Mason, and Stephen Gorton, elders, with seven brethren. Elder Sprague had been much engaged in preaching up the doctrines which had promoted the late revival of religion in this country, and he assisted in ordaining Mr. Samuel Drown, as pastor of a Baptist church lately formed in Coventry, October 11, 1749, where he met with several Separate ministers from Connecticut, and invited them to come and preach among his people, which they did with great effects. And on April 4, 1750, Sprague acted with Mr. Paine, in ordaining Mr. Stephen Babcock as pastor of a Baptist church in Westerly. And upon these things, above seventy members of this church, male and female, signed a paper in May, 1750, to shut him out of their meeting-house, and he went and gathered a church in Exeter. Mr. James Wightman was afterwards ordained a pastor of this church, and remained so until his death in the spring of 1791. Mr. Nathan Hill was ordained a colleague with him in 1781, and still continues in that office. And for some years past they have received men to preach in their meeting-house, who have held forth the doctrine that was shut out of it in 1750. A church was formed in connection with them in Richmond, and Mr. John Pendleton was ordained their pastor in June, 1771 ; and Mr. Henry Joslin succeeds him therein.

Hopkinton was once the north part of Westerly, where some of Mr. Clarke's church lived, before the separation on account of the Sabbath took place in 1671. Mr. John Crandal was one of them, who was imprisoned with Clarke and Holmes at Boston, in 1651. He was called over to New London, and baptized some men there in 1674, for which the minister of



the town threatened him with a prosecution the next court ; and "old Mrs. Rogers was laid under admonition for maintaining that children had no right to baptism." In 1678, Mr. Hubbard wrote to a friend in Jamaica, and said, "Our number here is twenty, at Westerly seven, and at New London ten." On December 7, 1681, he wrote to England, that two Indians came to Newport that week from Nantucket, who were Baptists, and one of them a preacher, with "a letter of recommendation from one Peter Folger, a member of our old church ;" that is, of Mr. Clarke's church. This preacher was going over to Soconet to preach to the Indians there, of which Captain Church had given them notice. Thomas West and his wife, and another English woman, and two Indians, of Martha's Vineyard, had joined this church at Newport before ; and on January 28, 1682, Hubbard wrote to Providence, and said, "There is a brother here, of Martha's Vineyard, one Isaac Takkamme, an Indian, who brings word that all are well there ; brother West and his wife, and sister Rogers, and our brother David Okes, an Indian, and that they stand fast in the faith." Isaac Decamy was afterwards pastor of a Baptist church among the Indians there, who might be the same person.<sup>1</sup> In 1708, the brethren at Westerly were amicably dismissed, and formed a church there. I have not obtained an exact account of their ministers since, though I find, by Mr. Comer, that Mr. Joseph Maxon was their pastor in 1729, and Mr. Thomas Hiscox was a preacher among them ; and he was a minister there to old age. Mr. Joshua Clarke was a minister at Hopkinton for many years, and died in June, 1792. And by a letter from Rhode Island, September 11, 1795, we are informed as follows :—

The church at Hopkinton at present consists of four hundred and sixty-two members, under the care of the Reverend John Burdick, who was ordained an evangelist, June 6, 1774, and installed pastor of the church, September 3, 1793. At the same time and place, Henry Clarke, (son of the late Elder Joshua Clarke,) was ordained an evangelist. Also Asa Coon was ordained an evangelist the same day. Three churches have been set off from this church at Hopkinton in fellowship in fifteen years. One at Bristol, in Connecticut, constituted in September, 1780, formerly under the care of the Reverend John Davis, deceased, of about seventy members. A second church at Petersburg, in New York State, of ninety-two members, under the care of the Reverend William Coon. A third at New London, Great Neck, of forty-two members, under the care of the Reverend Davis Rogers. Elder Clarke has lately moved to Brookfield, at the Unodille, in the State of New York, where are about twenty members who meet stately on the Sabbath for divine worship, and it is expected that they will soon form into a church.

Mr. David Sprague was born at Hingham, in the Massachusetts, and was converted at Scituate, in this State, where he joined to the Baptist church under the care of Elder Fisk. As he was a man of superior gifts,

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 346, 347.

he was invited to preach among them ; but a sense of the greatness of the work made him afraid to attempt it, until a passage of Scripture was opened with peculiar clearness to his mind, and then he came forward and delivered a sermon. This was very agreeable to his minister, and to the people ; but when he preached his second discourse, they observed more the tenor of his teaching, and said to him, "If you go on in this way, you will be as bad an *electioner* as any of the Presbyterians." This account I received from his own mouth ; and he informed me that their opposition turned him back into their general way of preaching, for a number of years. And his coming forward in preaching as he was first taught, caused his being shut out of the church where he was first ordained, and another was formed at Exeter, in the fall of 1750. But as they had before made so much of external baptism and laying on of hands, they now went over to the other extreme, and received one or more to the ordinance of the Supper without any water baptism. The powerful effects of the preaching of Separate ministers from Connecticut, had a great influence to cause this turn in their minds ; and an acquaintance with lively Baptist ministers, also removed the prejudices against the Baptists, from the minds of many in Connecticut, and many were soon baptized, and it seemed as though all their Separate churches would become Baptists. But this raised such opposition to what they called *rebaptizing*, in the mind of the pastor of the Separate church in Canterbury, where the separation began, that he, with others, prevailed with seven or eight teachers to retract their baptism by immersion. And a council of them censured the pastor of the First Separate church in Middleborough, because he refused to follow that example. But this censure caused the meeting of the delegates of twenty-seven churches at Exeter, May 23, 1753, who condemned the censuring of each other on either side.<sup>1</sup> Though the divisions and controversies that have appeared where believers' baptism has been introduced have been held up as a strong argument against it from age to age. In 1653, Mr. Henry Dunstar, president of the college at Cambridge, gave up infant baptism, and preached against it in the pulpit there. But Mr. Jonathan Mitchel, pastor of their church, went to talk with him upon it, after which he said :—

I had a strange experience ; I found hurrying and pressing suggestions against pædobaptism, and injected scruples and thoughts whether the other way might not be right, and infant baptism an invention of men, and whether I might with good conscience baptize children, and the like. And these thoughts were darted in with some impression, and left a strange confusion and sickness upon my spirit. Yet, methought, it was not hard to discern that they were from the *evil one*. 1. Because they were rather injected, hurrying suggestions, than any deliberate thoughts, or bringing any light with them. 2. Because they were *unseasonable*, interrupting me in my study for the Sabbath, and putting my spirit into [a] confusion, so as I

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 112, 113.

had much ado to do aught in my sermon. It was not now a time to study that matter; but when in the former part of the week I had given myself to that study, the more I studied it, the more clear and rational light I saw for pædobaptism; but now these suggestions hurried me into scruples. But they made me cry out to God for his help, and he did afterward calm and clear up my spirit. I thought the end of them was—First. To shew me the corruption of my mind; how apt that was to take in error, even as my heart is to take in lust. Secondly. To make me walk in fear, and to take hold on Jesus Christ to keep me in the truth; and it was a check to my former self-confidence, and it made me fearful to go needlessly to Mr. Dunstar; for, methought, I found a venom and poison in his insinuations and discourses against pædobaptism. Thirdly. That I might be mindful of the aptness in others to be soon shaken in mind, and that I might warn others thereof, and might know how to speak to them from experience. And indeed my former experience of irreligious injections, was some help to me to discover the nature of these. I resolved also on Mr. Hooker's principle, that I would have an argument able to remove a mountain, before I would recede from, or appear against a truth or practice received among the faithful.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Cotton Mather published this account in 1697, and Mr. John Cleaveland, of Ipswich, inserted it in the introduction to a large pamphlet on infant baptism, which he published at Salem, 1784. Mr. Cleaveland was expelled out of New Haven college in 1744, for meeting for worship on the Lord's day in a house separate from the parish meeting-house in Canterbury, with the First Congregational church in that town, who had refused to receive a teacher whom the world would have forced upon them. But our Lord says, Many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first. Matt. xix. 30. And so it has been in our land. Those Separate churches began in Canterbury, from whence they spread through all our country; but there is not one of them now left in the Massachusetts, and but few in Connecticut, while Canterbury still refuses to give up infant sprinkling. The church in Exeter prospered under the ministry of Elder Sprague for about ten years, and then he gave up communion in the ordinance of the Supper with all who were only sprinkled in infancy, which caused his dismissal from this church. He then went and preached a while at New London, and another season on Block Island, which is called New Shoreham; after which he returned to Exeter, where he died in 1777. His son, Solomon Sprague, was early changed by grace, and he was ordained a pastor of this church June 1, 1769. He was a good physician, as well as a faithful and successful minister of the gospel, until he fell asleep in February, 1794, aged sixty-five. Mr. Joseph Case was a useful preacher in this church, until he removed into the State of New York, in 1791. This church have experienced greater blessings since they gave

<sup>1</sup>Mitchel's Life, pp. 69, 70. [Magnalia, Vol. II, p. 79.]—B.

See also, Vol. I, p. 228.—Ed.



up mixed communion than they ever did before. Mr. John Tillinghast has been a main elder among them lately.

Mr. Stephen Babcock was one of the first members of a Congregational church that was formed in Westerly, May 5, 1742.<sup>1</sup> But in a few years after he saw such opposition in his minister and others, against what he believed to be the power of godliness, that he withdrew and set up a meeting at his own house, and a church was gathered there, and he was ordained their pastor, April 4, 1750; in whose ordination Elder David Sprague and Elder Solomon Paine united, it being the first instance of the two denominations uniting in such an action among these churches. Elder Babcock was zealous for such a union all his days, while others renounced it. He died after the war began in 1775. His son, Oliver Babcock, was his successor in that office until he died, February 13, 1784. His cousin, Elkanah Babcock, was their next minister, until the majority of the church rejected him because of his turning off into corrupt principles. In the mean time another church was gathered in Westerly, about the year 1770, and Mr. Isaiah Wilcox was ordained their pastor, who was very zealous for the communion of the two denominations together, and they were a large church when he died in March, 1793. In the fall of 1750, such a church was formed in South Kingstown, and Mr. James Rodgers was ordained their pastor, and he continued so about twenty years; but he had entangled himself so much in the affairs of this life, and was involved so deeply in debt, that he went off into the State of New York, and his church was divided and dissolved. A number of them, who still hold to mixed communion, have lately had a revival among them, to whom others have joined, and they are of the Groton Conference. But in the work which began in 1778, a number gave up mixed communion, and formed a church there, and Mr. Benjamin Weight was ordained their pastor, in August, 1781, in which office he is yet continued. Another church arose out of the ruins of the former about 1774, who since meet in Richmond, and Mr. Benjamin Barber was ordained their pastor in 1793. In another part of Richmond a new church was formed, and Mr. Charles Boss was ordained their pastor in June, 1781, and he was well esteemed in his office until his death in 1789. These three churches do not hold to mixed communion. But when the church in Exeter gave up that practice, Deacon Philip Jenkins drew off from them, and gathered a church in that way, July 21, 1764, and he was ordained their pastor the 6th of September following, and is still continued with them. Their meeting is in North Kingstown. And in the glorious year 1780, religion was revived in the south part of that town, and a new church was gathered, and Mr. William Northup was ordained their pastor in 1782, and they are now a large church. An Indian Baptist church was formed in Charlestown, in this county, above thirty years ago, of which

<sup>1</sup>Prince's Christian History, Vol. I, pp. 207, 210.

James Symonds was pastor, and then Samuel Niles ; and they had many valuable Christians therein ;<sup>1</sup> but most of them are since dead, and the church is dissolved. The chief of the Indians who are living have removed into the State of New York.

## COUNTY OF KENT.

The first Baptist church in this county was in Warwick, and Mr. Manasseh Martin was their minister, before 1730. In a letter from Governor Jencks, in February that year, he says, "I have often heard, that Elder Martin denied that Christ received any part of the human nature of the Virgin Mary, in whose womb he was conceived, and by whom he was born into the world." He held Jesus to be the only begotten Son of God, but held his humanity in a mystical way, which caused much uneasiness among his brethren, excepting Elder Everet, who appeared to be of his mind. Mr. Charles Holden succeeded Martin, and was pastor of this church for many years ; and Mr. Abraham Lippert was ordained therein in October, 1782 ; but in 1794 he removed into the State of New York, and Mr. Samuel Littlefield was ordained in his place at Warwick. The church in East Greenwich was formed, and Mr. Daniel Fisk was ordained their pastor in June, 1743. He was son to Elder Fisk, of Scituate ; and he ministered to this church about four years, and then was dismissed and went and preached in various places, until he died with the small-pox in Swansea in 1764. Mr. John Gorton was born in Cranston, April 22, 1723, and was ordained a pastor of this church, September 6, 1753 ; and he was an acceptable minister among them until his death in 1793. And Mr. Manchester, of Coventry, now ministers also to this church. Mr. Timothy Greene was formerly the pastor of a Baptist church in Coventry, wherein Mr. Thomas Manchester was ordained, September 12, 1782. A church was formed in the west part of Warwick, in connection with these, and Mr. David Corpe was ordained their minister in 1791. A Baptist church had been formed in the same place about fifty years ago, and Mr. Benjamin Pierce was ordained their pastor, and they came into fellowship with Exeter church and others in 1750. And they increased so much, that Mr. Peter Werden was ordained a colleague with him, May 21, 1751. And he labored there until April, 1757, when he removed up to Coventry, by the consent of the church. After Mr. Pierce's death, Mr. Budlong was their minister for a while, and then his church was dissolved, and many of them removed into other parts of the country. There was a powerful work in Coventry in 1748, and a Baptist church was formed there, and Mr. Samuel Drown was ordained their pastor, October 11, 1749. But in a few years he gave up his Baptist principles, and went and settled at Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, where

<sup>1</sup>In 1784, Niles's church had about fifty members.

he practiced infant baptism the remainder of his days. He died three January 17, 1770. After Elder Werden removed to Coventry, he ministered to the church there for twelve years, in which time many were hopefully converted, and Christians were built up in the ways of God, and then, as a large part of his people had removed, he also went and settled where he now is in Berkshire. The west part of Coventry, and of the towns adjacent, had very little of the appearance of religion among them, until God was pleased to pour out his Spirit upon them in the beginning of 1773. Mr. Caleb Nichols was greatly blessed in his labors there afterwards. He was born in West Greenwich in March, 1743, met with a change in 1767, and began to preach among this people in 1773, and a church was formed, and he was ordained their pastor in June, 1774. When the war came on, it produced many evil effects; yet in May, 1779, such a revival of religion was granted in these parts, that he baptized above sixty in two months, and his church increased to three hundred members in five years. But in the great shakings and confusion which took place in 1786, this church was scattered, and many removed into other parts of the land, and Elder Nichols was dismissed in the spring of 1788, and went and settled at Pownal, in Vermont, where he is still useful. Mr. Nathaniel Price was raised up to preach to this church, and he now holds meetings with some of them at the house where Elder Werden formerly preached, and Mr. John Benson preaches where Nichols did, though neither of them is ordained. A Baptist church was formed in West Greenwich in 1773, and Mr. Elisha Greene was ordained their pastor, September 21, 1775, and remains so still.

A few general remarks shall close this chapter. The multiplicity of sects in this State, has often been advanced as an argument against the religious liberty which was granted therein; but there are now about as many sects in the town of Boston, as there are in the whole State of Rhode Island. There are some in Boston who pray for souls in purgatory, while others boldly preach up the fire of hell as that which will finally purge away all sin, without the prayers of any in this world. And these things are carried the highest in Boston and Philadelphia, of any part of America. A party spirit, and bribery in election of rulers, were formerly laid as a great reproach on the colony of Rhode Island; but our land is full of these evils now, and they have been carried as high as any where in the town of Boston. Our land has also been filled, in the year past, with publications against our highest rulers, because a man was sent to England, and made a treaty with the rulers there, which gives them more power here than they had before. But in the year 1786 two ministers came over with commissions from the bishops in England, and they have made other bishops in most of the United States, to whom moneys and lands are given by governments; yet most men are silent about these things, or else commend



them as evidences of candor and catholicism in our land. Whereas the bishops, and their ministry in England, who have been supported by law, have had more influence in their late wars against liberty in America and France, than all other men in their nation. But as the government of Rhode Island never granted any lands to religious ministers, nor supported any by tax, all the power of the church of England has raised no more than four of their societies in the whole State, and one of them is now nearly dissolved if not quite.<sup>1</sup> Governor Jencks was a leader in making the law in 1716, to exclude all suing for ministers' salaries from their courts, though he was in earnest to have the ministers of Christ supported voluntarily.<sup>2</sup> But a custom was introduced into their government in 1770, of incorporating societies to collect and manage funds of money for the support of religious ministers; and the hope of obtaining such a fund in Mr. Snow's congregation in Providence, was an evident motive for the ordination there in 1793, which shut him out of a house that he had as just a right in, as any minister has to any house for worship in our land. And the four ministers from the Massachusetts, who acted in that affair, are far from allowing the people in their own government a power to dismiss their minister without his own consent, or else the advice of a council whom he had a voice in calling. And according to the word of God, the only ministers who are to be followed, hold forth Christ in their conversation, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and are willing in all things to live honestly. Heb. xiii. 7, 8, 18. But how can any man live honestly, who eats the bread of others for nought? II Thess. iii. 7—10. And how can a people live honestly, if they require their minister to go a warfare at his own charges? I Cor. ix. 7—14. Each of which iniquities has long prevailed under the mask of religion, beyond what they could possibly have done in any other way.

<sup>1</sup>Bishop Seabury, who claimed a power there, died in March, 1796, since the first part of this book was printed.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 22; Vol. I, p. 482.



## CHAPTER XLII.

### STATE OF CONNECTICUT.—COUNTY OF NEW LONDON.

A CONCISE VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CONNECTICUT.—OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN GROTON.—NEW LONDON.—STONINGTON.—LYME.—COLCHESTER, BOZRAH AND PRESTON.—THOMPSON.—ASHFORD.—WOODSTOCK.—HAMPTON AND KILLINGLY.—PLAINFIELD AND MANSFIELD.—FARMINGTON.—SUFFIELD.—ENFIELD AND OTHERS.—WALLINGFORD.—STRATFIELD.—STAMFORD, &C.—COUNTY OF LITCHFIELD.—OF MIDDLESEX.—TOLLAND.

Connecticut has ever had the privilege of choosing her own rulers, and of making her own laws, as well as Rhode Island; and ministerial influence was much more mild there at first, than it has been in our days. John Haines was the governor of Massachusetts Bay in 1635, and pronounced the sentence of banishment against Roger Williams; but he and Mr. Thomas Hooker went up to Connecticut soon after. And when Williams was at his house at Hartford, Haines said to him, "I must now confess to you, that the most wise God hath provided and cut out this part of his world for a refuge and a receptacle for all sorts of consciences. I am now under a cloud, and my brother Hooker, with the Bay, as you have been. We have removed from them thus far, and yet they are not satisfied."<sup>1</sup> No, nor ever could be satisfied in that way. For in 1708, a governor who had been a minister, and came from the Massachusetts, obtained an act to set up ministers above all their churches. And in 1742, their ministers procured a law to punish every man who should preach the gospel in any parish, without the consent of the parish minister. And as Mr. John Owen, pastor of the first parish in Groton, ventured to preach against such proceedings, he was complained of to the legislature at Hartford, in May, 1743, and an act was passed to bring him before them the next October. A resolve was also passed, that no persons of the Presbyterian or Congregational denominations should have the benefit of the Act of Toleration,

<sup>1</sup>Massachusetts Historical Collections, Vol. I, p. 280.



granted to dissenters from their establishment, and that no courts below the legislature should have power to admit any to that privilege. Owen avoided being taken in October, when a law was made against the preaching of any itinerant minister who might come from any other government. And as a complaint was entered against Dr. Benjamin Pomeroy, of Hebron, for preaching against their laws, both he and Owen were ordered to be brought before them the next May. And in May, 1744, both of them were brought before the Assembly at Hartford, and were compelled to make a confession for said preaching, to pay costs of prosecution, and Pomeroy was bound to his good behavior. And in the December following, the ministers of Windham county ordained a minister for the first parish in Canterbury, against the vote of the church there; which began the separation in our country, from such ministers and their churches. And how can any men be justly blamed for separating from those who claimed a power above the churches of Christ?

The first Baptist church in Connecticut was formed in Groton about 1705. Elder Valentine Wightman came from North Kingstown, and settled in Groton, and was the first pastor of this church. They suffered for a while from the ruling party; but in the glorious year 1741, he and Mr. Owen were agreed in the work which was then going on in the land, and they enjoyed liberty until Elder Wightman was taken away by death, June 9, 1747, aged sixty-six. He introduced singing in public worship into his church, and published a pamphlet to defend it. And being called to preach in Lyme, Mr. Bulkley, of Colchester, came and held a dispute with him upon baptism and the support of gospel ministers, June 7, 1727, of which Bulkley published an account, and Wightman answered it.<sup>1</sup> After his death the church called Elder Daniel Fisk to be their minister, and he continued with them seven years; but they were then so much divided, that many of them gave a new declaration of their experiences, and signed new articles of faith and a covenant, June 28, 1754, and elected Mr. Timothy Wightman to be their pastor, and he was ordained as such, May 20, 1756, and continues so still. He is a son of their first pastor, and was born November 20, 1719. His brother, John Wightman, was ordained as an evangelist by this church, June 15, 1774, and travelled and preached in various parts of the country.<sup>2</sup> A daughter of their first pastor married a Mr. Rathbun, who has two sons and two grandsons, who are ordained Baptist ministers. Elder Timothy Wightman's son, Jesse, is also a Baptist minister at Springfield. A dispute arose in this church in September, 1765, about the nature of spiritual teaching and the improvement of gifts, upon

<sup>1</sup>See Vol. I, pp. 519. 520.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Wightman was a shining example of uniform piety and benevolence, until death put an end to his useful life, which he ended in the most joyful manner at Farmington.

which a division ensued, and another church was formed, in which Mr. Silas Burris was ordained; and they held to mixed communion, and the Groton Conference was named from thence. But a revival of religion was granted in the mother church in 1774, which caused the addition of thirty members to it in about a year; and another church was formed in the north part of Groton, May 25, 1775, and Mr. Rufus Allen was ordained their pastor, and they had thirty-six members in 1784. But their pastor died not long after, since which their church is dissolved. Though the First Baptist church in Groton had seventy-eight members in 1787, and they increased to one hundred and fifty-eight in two years, and to one hundred and eighty-two in 1794, beside all that have died, have been dismissed or excluded.

The second Baptist church in Connecticut was formed at New London, and Mr. Stephen Gorton was ordained their pastor, November 28, 1726. He was a man of considerable gifts, and was minister there for many years; but he fell into some scandalous conduct, and his church was finally dissolved. It was in that part of the town where the church now is which keeps the seventh day as the Sabbath, of which we have spoken before. In January, 1744, Elder Timothy Peckom baptized some persons in the heart of the town, and some more at Saybrook, for which he was put in prison; and a church was gathered a year or two after, of the two denominations together; and Mr. Noah Hammond was ordained in this church in July, 1754, who afterwards was pastor of a church on Long Island, where he died in October, 1774. Elder Lester was also of this church, who is now at Saybrook. Another church was formed, and Mr. Joshua Morse was ordained their pastor, May 17, 1750, who in the time of the late war removed to Sandisfield, and Mr. Reuben Palmer is minister in that place, which now is called Montville. Mr. Zadoc Darrow was an early teacher in the first of these churches, of which he has been pastor many years. He was born in December, 1728, and his church gave up mixed communion in 1790, and there was such a revival among them in 1794 as caused the addition of ninety-one members in one year. John Rogers began a sect in this town in 1677, upon the following principles. As to language and dress they held with the Quakers, but they held the external use of baptism and the Supper as the Baptists do. But they held that the establishing the first day of the week as the Sabbath was idolatry, and they took much pains to pull it down, by testifying against it, and interrupting others in their keeping it. They were also earnestly set against supporting ministers by law; and they suffered much for their opposition to these two practices; and they were singular in refusing to employ any physicians in sickness, or midwives for women in travail, holding that they were to be healed or delivered by the prayer of faith. But as a few of them were left to put an end to their own lives, and rulers have been so wise of late

as to avoid their former severities towards them, their society is nearly dissolved, and many of their children are very useful men in various parts of the country.<sup>1</sup> Three brethren of one family are deacons in three Baptist churches.

The work of the Spirit of God in our land in 1741, was very powerful in Stonington, where there were three Congregational societies, with ministers in each of them. Two of those ministers favored the work as long as their churches were increased thereby; but a new piece of cloth, if put into an old garment, makes the rent worse, and new wine will burst old bottles, as our Lord observes to those who were building upon their own doings and traditions. Luke v. 31—38. Such opposition appeared against the late work, and Elder Wightman was so clear in it, that a number of people were baptized and formed a church in Stonington, and Mr. Wait Palmer was ordained their pastor in September, 1743. And after the separation began at Canterbury, it spread into Stonington, and a church was formed there, and Mr. Matthew Smith was ordained their pastor, December 10, 1746; and he continued with them until the spring of 1749, and then left them and removed out of the town. And many embraced believers' baptism and went and joined to Elder Babcock's church in Westerly; and when Mr. Paine had determined to use all his influence to stop the prevalence of the Baptist principles in their Separate churches, he and Babcock joined in writing letters to all their churches; and delegates from forty churches met at the house of Mr. Simon Brown, of Stonington, May 29, 1754, and spent three days in hearing the controversies between the two parties. Mr. Solomon Paine took much pains to prove, that it was a bad temper and conduct in the Baptists that caused the breach between him and them. But his brother, Elisha Paine, a man of much more knowledge and experience, gave it as his mind, that the difficulty sprang from the nature of opposite principles. For sprinkling of infants upon the faith of their parents, and burying of believers upon the profession of their own faith, are opposite principles. And Mr. Elisha Paine said, "Dear brother, if you can reconcile the above principles, in the essential parts thereof, you will remove all the grounds of bars and disputes; but if there be an essential difference in the above articles, and consequently in the practice on them, then there is an Achan in the camp; and no marvel that Israel hath, in all reformation, been troubled therewith."<sup>2</sup> Infant baptism is built upon the covenant of circumcision, which made a great difference between Jews by nature, and all other men; but in the Christian church the apostle Peter could not countenance that distinction without dissimulation. Gal. ii. 11—16. And for stealing of holy things, and dissembling about them, Achan was destroyed in the valley of Achor. Joshua vii. 11—26. And God says of his church, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness,

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 11, 12: Vol. I, pp. 376—384, 388.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 114.



and speak comfortably unto her ; and I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope, and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came out of the land of Egypt. And I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy ; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people ; and they shall say, Thou art my God. Hosea ii. 14, 15, 23. This he says to his church under the gospel. I Peter ii. 10 ; Rom. ix. 25. The Holy Scriptures are our rule, and not the best of men upon earth ; yet love to men as Christians was then set up by many as the rule of communion, instead of the written word ; and their inward feelings were also made a rule of discipline, until some were censured for not concurring therewith. Upon this they renounced mixed communion, and gathered a Second Baptist church in Stonington, and Mr. Simeon Brown was ordained their pastor in March, 1765. And a parish minister in Stonington said two years after, "Not less than two-thirds of the congregation, formerly under my care, have withdrawn from my ministry, and formed themselves into Baptist and Separate churches."<sup>1</sup> And in January, 1769, Mr. Eleazar Brown was ordained in the First Baptist church in that town, which is four miles north of the other. He was born in Stonington, in June, 1728, and was a faithful and successful minister, until he died in peace, July 11, 1795. Such a blessing was granted there in 1792, as caused the addition of fifty-six members to this church ; and in 1793, Mr. Peleg Randal was ordained a colleague pastor in this church, in which he yet continues. And on October 22, 1794, they ordained Mr. Abel Brown as an evangelist, to go and labor in the State of New York. Elder Wait Palmer is yet living, but has not preached much for many years. Elder Simeon Brown was born in Stonington, January 31, 1723, and his usefulness is still granted, and in the revival of 1792, seventy-six members were added to his church. The Third Baptist church in Stonington was constituted down at the harbor, April 22, 1775, and Mr. Valentine Wightman Rathbun was ordained their pastor in May, 1787. He was born May 13, 1761. Mr. John Rathbun, his father, was ordained there as an evangelist, March 15, 1781, and is settled in Ashford. A fourth church was formed in Stonington, and Mr. Samuel Northup, from Narragansett, was ordained their pastor in 1793, in connection with the Groton Conference.

A Separate church was formed at Lyme, and Mr. Ebenezer Mack was ordained their pastor, January 12, 1749. He and many of the church became Baptists afterwards, and he continued with them until he was dismissed, in September, 1768, and he removed to Marlow, in New Hampshire. And Mr. Jason Lee was ordained the pastor of this church, and has had great success therein, being connected with the Groton Conference. There had been a Baptist church in the east part of Lyme before this, but they were broken and dissolved. There was also a Baptist church

<sup>1</sup>Preface to Fish's Nine Sermons, p. 3.

formed in the north part of that town, and Mr. Christopher Minor was their minister for some years, who is now at Enfield.

A Baptist church was formed in Colchester, in 1743, and Mr. Zebulon Waterman was their minister for a number of years. After him Mr. Ichabod Allen ministered to them for a longer time, and he is still living among them; but he has been rather unsteady both in his principles and conduct, which served to scatter the flock. But in May, 1784, a new gathering and union took place among them, and Mr. Abel Palmer became their pastor, under whose ministry they have enjoyed many blessings. Their house for worship is near the borders of Montville. Another Baptist church had been formed in Colchester, in 1783, near the borders of Lebanon, and Mr. Christopher Palmer, father to Abel, was ordained their pastor. They came from Stonington. Many blessings have been granted upon these churches, and upon people who have sprung from them, many of whom have settled in the wilderness, upon the head branches of the Mohawk and Susquehanna rivers, in the State of New York, where a new Association was formed in 1795, of thirteen churches, and more than five hundred members, which churches have been all formed in five years, as Mr. Abel Palmer says, who was at said Association. Those people went mainly from New England, and a large part of them out of the Stonington Association. There has been a mixed communion church in Norwich, in that part which is now Bozrah, for several years, and Mr. Peter Rogers was their minister, who is now at Hampton, but I know not how their state now is. The mixed communion church of Preston, have many of their members in Canterbury, and meetings are often held in both places.

#### COUNTY OF WINDHAM.

As the great reformation in our land was opposed by the ruling party in Thompson, then a part of Killingly, a separation took place there, and a Baptist church was formed in 1750, and Mr. Whitman Jacobs was ordained their pastor. They held the laying on of hands upon every member as a term of communion, and an Association was formed upon those principles, which increased to about eight churches in 1763; but in two years after, the most of them gave up that bar of communion, of whom Mr. Jacobs was one, and a council was called at Thompson in February, 1767, which could not unite the church; and as a number of them removed soon after to Royalstone, their minister removed there also in 1769. The brethren in Thompson, after many labors, covenanted together anew in September, and Mr. John Martin was ordained their pastor, November 3, 1773. He went from Rehoboth, and is still useful among them.

Mr. Thomas Dennison was baptized by Elder Wightman, of Groton, in the summer of 1743, and he gathered a small church at Ashford, where he was ordained in November following. Elder Moulton assisted in his ordi-

nation, who derived his succession from Mr. John Callender, and he from his uncle Elisha Callender, in whose ordination three Congregational ministers of Boston assisted. And this line of succession is much valued by some, while all who consistently hold the Congregational principles, adopted by the fathers of the Massachusetts, hold that the power of ordination is in each church. This church in Ashford broke up in a year or two, and Mr. Dennison turned back to infant baptism, and he assisted in the ordinations of the first Separate ministers in Mansfield, Canterbury, Plainfield, and Norwich; and was installed himself as pastor of a church in that part of Norwich which is now Franklin, all in the year 1746. But in a few years he left that people, and preached occasionally in various parts of the country, without being settled over any other flock, until he died in Brooklyn, near Canterbury, October 24, 1787. A new Baptist church was formed in Ashford in 1774, and Mr. Ustick preached to them for a year or two, and then went to Grafton, and Mr. Ebenezer Lamson was ordained their pastor, June 10, 1778. But he removed to Sutton in April, 1783, as was before observed; and after several years, they obtained Mr. Dyer Stark for their minister, who has had considerable success among them. The Second Baptist church in Ashford was formed in the glorious year 1780. Mr. John Rathbun had removed from Stonington, into the north part of Ashford before; and after this church was formed, he was ordained at Stonington, March 15, 1781, and has been the pastor of this church ever since. He was born June 26, 1729. In a revival of religion in the east part of Ashford, a third church was formed, and Mr. Daniel Bolton was ordained therein, June 27, 1792. He went from Bridgewater. Part of this church live in Pomfret. About three years after, Mr. Bolton gathered another church near the adjoining corners of Ashford, Union and Woodstock, and settled as their minister.

The first Baptist church in Woodstock was gathered in the following manner. Biel Ledoyt was a chief leader in mirth and vanity among young people there, before he heard a Baptist minister preach a sermon in the town, in December, 1763, which was a means of fixing conviction of sin in his conscience, and in the March following, his soul was brought into gospel liberty; but as soon as his change was heard of abroad, four of his old companions came one evening, to try if they could not draw him back to his former ways again. He readily retired with them to a place where they could be by themselves, and he laid open to them the way of sin and death, and the way of life and peace, in such a manner that two of them went home with a deep sense of sin upon their minds, which terminated happily, and religious meetings were frequent among young people, until a large number were hopefully converted. For some time after this work began, they attended the parish meetings for worship, as they had done before; but such opposition was raised against the work by the Congrega-



tional party, as convinced these young believers that they could not be edified among them; and upon searching the Scriptures, they were convinced that believers' baptism was the way that Christ had instituted, and many obeyed him therein, and a Baptist church was formed in Woodstock in 1766, and Mr. Ledoyt was ordained their pastor, May, 26, 1768, and they had forty-eight members in 1773.<sup>1</sup> And though it was a dark time with

<sup>1</sup> "On December 9th, 1763, it pleased the Lord to begin his mighty work in Woodstock; and was pleased to take hold of my heart on that day, who was the first person (so far as I know) that was convicted, and who had been noted for vanity. I soon saw myself an undone sinner, condemned by God's law, and an heart-enemy to God and to all that was good, unable to help myself, and no way open to escape his wrath. All hopes of escaping his wrath were almost gone, when God convinced me of his sovereignty and justice, and on the 12th day of March following, caused me to fall into his hands and revealed his Son to me and in me. I then saw a world lying in wickedness, and the necessity of men being made new creatures fell with weight upon my mind, and I felt myself disposed to speak to them about it; which was surprising to them who heard me, the rather because it came from such a noted sinner. The unexpected and surprising news soon flew abroad, upon which some of my companions came to see me one evening, to see if they could not laugh me out of that notion which I was possessed of, as some of them soon confessed. I soon began to talk with them about death and the need of being prepared for it, and when they heard, they stood like men amazed. I spent the evening with them, and, at the desire of one of them, I prayed with them, and while I was praying, one of them was pricked in the heart and cried out 'What shall we do?' and one of them was hardly able to go home, and these two were hopefully converted soon after. But they desired that a meeting might be appointed at a school-house, which I gladly complied with. When I came to the house I was astonished, for, though it was a dark, cloudy night in March, people flocked from all parts of the society, until the house was full. The people were chiefly youths, that met, and there was no one to carry on the meeting but myself and the other two young men. We prayed and sang and read a sermon, and I exhorted. Those two young men were convinced, but were not as yet converted. They manifested their distress of soul, saying that they were going to hell, and warned others not to go to that place of torment. That was a night much to be remembered, for I believe that there were forty persons struck under conviction, and those persons that were convicted became loud preachers to those that were around them, both by their countenances and talk. Meetings were now attended two or three times a week. Convictions increased greatly. Parents were surprised to see their giddy children distressed for their souls. Some old professors, who had thought themselves Christians, now began to see that their building was upon the sand, and cried 'God be merciful to us sinners!' and at the first there were hardly any that dared to say a word against the work. Frolicking, which had been much practised, came to a stop. The Bible, and other good books, that had never been regarded, were now much in use. Our groves rang with the bitter outcries of the distressed youth. God was soon merciful to some of them, and delivered them from their distresses, and their sorrow was turned into joy, and their mouths filled with praise to their Redeemer, and they were then calling upon all to praise the Lord with them, and they recommended him to others, and this increased their distress.

"And this stirred up all the Christians in the society. Those who had been sleep-

them through most of the war, yet on September 8, 1780, they said in a letter to the Warren Association :—

After a long day of desertion and heavy trials, our God has returned to us. By means of the uncommon darkness in May last, the Lord was

ing, with the foolish virgins, began to lament their backslidings, and with joy, own the work to be of the Lord, and endeavored to be workers together with him; and those who were no more than professors, and intended to remain where they were, then were stirred up to oppose the work, and sought to use means to stop the progress of it. But all in vain. First, they met with them, and sought to regulate them, striving to keep them from exhorting each other. Then they began to talk much of errors, cautioned against spending too much time in meetings, and being out too late at night, and of being too much distressed, &c. But when they found they could not obtain their end in this way, they withdrew from our meetings, and fell to accusing, crying 'Error and delusion;' neighboring ministers were called in, and a fast proclaimed; and instead of being workers together with the Lord, they fell to reading about false spirits, and Satan's transforming himself into an angel of light, against false ministers, Separatists and separations, Baptists and Baptist preachers; intimating that the work was from Satan, and such ministers, the instruments of it, were the servants of Satan; and for no other reason, as I conceive, but that they were instruments in turning many from sin to God. Such preaching was much admired by the church in general, but it grieved the hearts of the tender lambs. They labored for a reformation, but all in vain, and they soon saw the need of a separation; and in the fall ensuing, they separated and met together as a society, and improved the gifts which God had given them, and it was attended with a blessing. Saints were comforted and sinners converted. The saints read the Scriptures to know their duty, and soon found they were not baptized, and a considerable number were baptized by immersion, and the number increased. We met as a society for more than a year, and then we thought that there were enough agreed to embody into a church; and in February, 1766, we embodied, to the number of fifteen, and had the ordinance of the Supper administered, and God's blessing attended it. There were some additions soon made. We made several attempts to obtain an elder but were disappointed. Some gifted brethren among us were very helpful, and brotherly love continued. It was apparent to all who had eyes to see, that God's work went on amongst us. But, with lamentation may we speak it, many that were awakened, turned off to their old courses again; but all that were members of the church, remained steadfast. We were greatly favored with several gifted elders, who were very helpful to us in our infancy; and in about three years after the work began, it pleased the Lord to call me forth publicly to preach his word, and, I trust, I was so enabled to do it, that it was satisfactory to the church. I preached among them constantly for several months, and then the church gave me a call to be their pastor, and I was ordained May 26, 1768; and in the June following, several members were added to us by baptism, and God blessed us together." Extract from a letter of Mr. Ledoyt to Mr. Backus.

Mr. Backus relates that during this revival, some persons waylaid Mr. Ledoyt, "to mob him as he came to meeting, but he happened to come in another road. Next time they waylaid that, and he came the former road. The third time they waylaid both roads, and providence so ordered that he came on foot across the fields, and thus was three times preserved from violence and abuse, by an unseen hand." Rev. S. Hall's Collection of papers.—Ed.

pleased to awaken some souls among us, and from that time the work of God has been going on gloriously in the west part of this town, where a goodly number are hopefully converted, and peace and love abound in the church, and we have had twenty-eight added to us, and there is a prospect of the spreading of the good work in other parts of this town and towns around us. Yet we are much affected with the long confinement of our brethren in Worcester goal,<sup>1</sup> and cannot but remember them in bonds as being bound with them; nor can we expect to fare better ourselves very long, notwithstanding our endeavoring to answer the unjust law of the ruling party, by giving certificates to the members of our society, which have been carried to the parish clerk; yet a considerable number of them are rated to the standing ministry, and soon expect to be distressed on that account.<sup>2</sup> Our oppressors are deaf to all reasoning upon the subject, and are determined to prosecute their design, let the consequence be what it may. These things, brethren, are peculiarly mortifying to us, especially when we consider that we have freely fought and bled by their sides in defence of liberty. It appears to us, that if ever there was a time, since tyranny had existence in America, that we were called upon to exert ourselves to obtain what is our own, it is now. Should we let slip this golden season, we fear our chains will be so fast rivetted that we shall not be able to shake them off. We feel but little heart to hold the sword against a British invader in defence of liberty, while our countrymen are endeavoring to deprive us of liberty of conscience. Oh, brethren! if we must be deprived of this, who would desire to live and possess the rest?

Their church increased the next year to a hundred and forty members. But in 1787 a member of a Congregational church obtained a meeting of this Baptist church, to hear a complaint which he had against one of their members, without taking the steps prescribed by our Lord in Matthew xviii; and it divided, and raised such a fire of contention in this church, as caused the dismissal of their pastor, at his request, in March, 1790, and he went into New Hampshire, where he is still useful. Another revival was granted in this church in 1792, and Mr. Samuel Webster was ordained there the 28th of June, who is now at Monson. A second Baptist church was then formed in Woodstock, and Mr. Amos Wells was ordained their pastor, August 9, 1792, and the Stonington Association met there in October, 1795, when it was a good time with them.

Mr. Ledoyt was called to preach in the south part of Pomfret, and a happy number were hopefully converted there, where were also several old believers; and they embraced the Baptist principles, and formed a church there, January 18, and Mr. William Grow was ordained their pastor, June 19, 1776, and they prospered under his ministry for several years. But in June, 1783, he confessed that he had fallen into the sin of adultery, and resigned his office, and afterwards removed into Vermont. Though this was very shocking, yet the church persevered in their profession, and obtained

<sup>1</sup>Three men of Harvard Society, before spoken of.

<sup>2</sup>Several of them were strained upon for such taxes.



occasional supplies from time to time, until they called and settled Mr. Peter Rogers as their pastor in 1794, who had before been a minister in Bozrah. The place where this church meets, with a part of Windham, were lately incorporated into a town by the name of Hampton. A Baptist church was formed in Killingly, May 22, 1776, and Mr. George Robinson was ordained their pastor the 13th of November following, and they increased to sixty-one members in five years. But there arose such difficulties in the church, about the time of the close of the war, that they called a council, and then dismissed and recommended their minister, and he removed to Bridgewater in June, 1784, where he is still useful. They have passed through many changes in Killingly since, without obtaining so happy a settlement as were to be wished.

The separation in Plainfield prevailed so far, that the general scheme of taxing all to Congregational ministers was given up, and a minister was settled in their town meeting-house in 1784, who is supported by subscription and a public fund, and the Separate meeting was dissolved. But in the summer of 1792, a remarkable awakening took place in the east part of the town, and in Stirling, under the ministry of Mr. Nathanael Cole; and a Baptist church was formed there, October 16, 1792, and he was installed their pastor the 5th of December after, having been ordained at Swansea before; and in two years this church increased to eighty-seven members. I have not obtained any distinct account of the present Baptist church in Mansfield, only what Mr. Asplund has given in his Register.

#### COUNTY OF HARTFORD.

The First Baptist church in the county of Hartford was first constituted in Wallingford. A number of people in that town became Baptists about 1731, and joined the Baptist church in New London, but usually met for worship at Wallingford, until they obtained a dismission, formed a church there, and ordained Mr. John Merriman as their pastor, in 1739. He was born in Wallingford, October 15, 1695; and as he was a hearty friend to the great work which came on in our land two years after he was ordained, he obtained Dr. Bellamy, and then Mr. Robbins, to preach in his society, as they were clear preachers of the gospel. But Mr. Robbins was most cruelly persecuted by his brethren in the ministry, for preaching among the Baptists against their advice, as we have before shown.<sup>1</sup> In the year 1750, the body of this church removed to the south part of Farmington, where they still remain. Mr. Merriman continued their faithful pastor as long as he was able to labor with them, and he died there in 1784. Afterwards they obtained various helps, until they came into the state that is before described, from the Minutes of the Danbury Association for 1795. Bristol

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 42, 43, 81—85.

is not far from them, where is the church which keeps the seventh day as the Sabbath.

Suffield, on the west side of Connecticut River, had a powerful work in 1735, and a greater work six years after ; and when the separations came on, two Separate churches were formed in the town, and each had an ordained minister. Mr. Israel Holly was one of them, who published several things in favor of their Separate churches, and then against the Baptists, after which he turned back, and became a parish minister. But Mr. John Hastings, son to their other Separate minister, was called to preach the gospel, and embraced believers' baptism ; and just as the war was coming on in our land, such a blessing was granted upon his labors, that a Baptist church was formed, and he was ordained their pastor in 1775, and it increased to above two hundred members in about a year. He has been very useful, at home and abroad, ever since.

Enfield, on the east side of the river against Suffield, had also two Separate churches, in one of which the Baptist principles were early adopted. Mr. Joseph Meacham was their minister, and they joined the Warren Association in 1769, when they had thirty members ; but they afterwards declined from their profession, and their minister fell in with the Shakers, and is since dead. The church was broken and scattered for a number of years ; but we hear of a late gathering among them, and that they have obtained Mr. Christopher Minor as their pastor. He came from Lyme, and was minister to the Baptist church in East Hartford for a number of years, who now have Mr. Stephen Shepard as their minister. A Baptist church was formed in the city of Hartford in 1789, which increased to fifty-three members in two years, and greater blessings are hoped for. A Separate meeting was set up at Windsor, as early as 1747, and Daniel Marshall went from thence in 1754, and labored with great success in the southern States, and began the first Baptist church in Georgia in 1772. His brother, Eliakim Marshall, was frequently a representative for Windsor in Connecticut legislature, before his cousin, Abraham Marshall, came there from Georgia, and baptized him, and he was pastor of a Baptist church there for four or five years, before he died there in June, 1791. But I know not how things have been in that church since. There has been a Baptist meeting in Wethersfield for many years, but perhaps not a church formed. The other Baptist churches in this county appear in the foregoing list.

#### COUNTY OF NEW HAVEN.

After the Baptist church of Wallingford was removed from thence, their parish minister died, and a division took place in the town, and the Conso- ciation of the county assisted in forming another church, and ordaining a second minister, because the majority had got a minister from Cambridge, whom they judged to be an Arminian. And as the corporation of Yale

College were very zealous against admitting any into it but strict Calvinists, long controversies were carried on in the government about it. And in February, 1783, the controversy was introduced into the public papers at Hartford, and it was pursued therein until June. And to shew how injurious the rulers of the college had been to its true interests, it was said :—

Mr. Collins, late of Newport, offered eight volumes to the library of Yale College. Being a Baptist, four of the volumes were in defence of this system. The offer of the books was accompanied with an intimation, that if the eight volumes were received with a good grace, the whole library of the said Mr. Collins, (who was a bachelor,) consisting of seven or eight hundred volumes, would probably be given to the college. But the condition of giving the eight volumes was not complied with. This condition was, that they should be placed in the library so that the students might see them, and, if they chose, read them.

The writer who gave this information styled himself Parnassus, to whom an answer was given by one who says :—

Parnassus finds fault that they did not accept of the Anabaptist books upon a shameful condition, which, if they had done it, would have been a ground of objection, that they had introduced erroneous books, and have given up the government of the college.

Thus it appears, that the corporation of the college were afraid to have any of their scholars read any books against infant baptism, lest it should weaken their plan of orthodoxy ; while men who wanted to pull down Calvinism, made use of this action as a means to do it, though they were far from favoring the Baptists. A change in the government of the college took place soon after, and the minister who had caused a separation at Wallingford removed and settled in New Haven, and two Baptist churches have since been formed at Wallingford. And through all the country the new Baptist churches have evidently sprung from the spiritual work therein, while the towns where that work was rejected remain in their old formality.

#### COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD.

Mr. John Sherwood was born in 1706, converted in 1741, and he with others separated from the parish worship in Stratfield, because a minister was settled there who did not appear to them to be a gospel preacher. In October, 1751, Elder Joshua Morse baptized him and a number more, and a Baptist church was then formed there, and on December 15, 1757, Mr. Sherwood was ordained their pastor, by the assistance of Elder Morse and Elder Timothy Wightman.<sup>1</sup> He ministered to that church about ten years,

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Sherwood was taxed for the support of Presbyterian worship, and the first year after his settlement, “a new tea-kettle” was taken by the collectors ; the second year, “a brass kettle containing half a barrel, and a pewter basin containing half a gallon, and another containing three pints, with about six plates and two platters.” Similar distress was made upon the members of his church.—ED.



and then his health failed, and Mr. Benjamin Coles was called from Long Island to preach to them, in the spring of 1768, and he labored with them until the fall of 1774, when he was called into New Jersey. Mr. Sherwood was then weak in body, but steadfast and comfortable in his mind; and how long he lived afterwards I know not. But the church called Mr. Seth Higby from Middletown, and he was ordained their pastor, and he continued so until 1793, and then he removed to a church in the State of New York, and Elder Stephen Royce, from New Hampshire, became their pastor.

The Baptist church in Stamford was formed in the following manner:—Dr. Joseph Bellamy published a piece in 1768, to prove that a credible profession of saving grace was necessary, in every person who came to the Lord's Supper, or who was active in baptism. But Dr. Moses Mather, of Stamford, published a discourse in April, 1769, wherein he owned that the covenant of circumcision with Abraham was not the covenant of grace, in the strict sense of the word, but held it to be a covenant wherein parents and their children were constituted members of the visible church of God, and that they ought to come to the Lord's Supper as a converting ordinance, if they were not converted before. Mr. Ebenezer Farris, of Stamford, had newly joined the first church in that town; but these things gave such a turn to his mind as caused him to search the Scriptures afresh, whereby he was fully convinced that baptism and the Holy Supper were instituted only for professing believers; and he was baptized by Mr. John Ganō, of New York, in April, 1770, as others were afterwards, until they obtained a regular dismission, and also assistance from the church in New York, and formed a Baptist church at Stamford, November 6, 1773, of twenty-one members. By a like dismission and assistance, a Baptist church was formed three days before on the borders of Greenwich, called Kingstreet; and Mr. Asplund mistakes in dating the beginning of that church in 1747. Mr. Farris was afterwards ordained the pastor of the church in Stamford, and also published a defence of believers' baptism. Mr. Ebenezer White, of Danbury, was a hearty friend to the revival of religion in our land; and when he read Sandeman's letters, he manifested an approbation of his ideas concerning the finished atonement of Christ, and so did a majority of his church; but a minor part went and entered a complaint against Mr. White to their Association, upon which he and a large majority of his church, on June 28, 1763, renounced the power that was claimed over the churches on the Saybrook Platform. But the ministers of that county were so unwilling to part with that power, that they met at Danbury, against the consent of Mr. White and the majority of his church, and rejected them as men who had separated from the ecclesiastical constitution of their government. This was on March 27, 1764. Sandeman came into our country the next October, and gathered churches in several places; but when he

came to Danbury, Mr. White could not agree with him in many things, though a number joined with him there, and also at New Haven, and Mr. Sandeman died at Danbury, April 2, 1771, aged fifty-three. But in the ensuing war, most of his followers held with Britain, and a number of them went off to Nova Scotia, and their societies are generally dissolved. In 1770, Mr. David Judson, minister at Newtown, renounced the Saybrook Platform, and published his mind against it, while the majority of the ministers exerted all their influence against him; and two Baptist churches have since been gathered in Danbury, and one in Newtown. Ridgefield is also in this county.

#### COUNTY OF LITCHFIELD.

There was more of a reformation in this county, in and after 1741, than in many parts of the country. Dr. Bellamy was a very active instrument of that reformation, and his writings afterwards upon the nature of religion, and also upon qualifications necessary for communion in the Christian church, scattered much light in our land; and several other ministers in the county of Litchfield have been clear preachers of the gospel, and successful in their labors, who now rest therefrom, and others have been introduced in their stead, who are men of another spirit. And since the late war, nine Baptist churches have been formed in this county, and seven of them in six years. But as new towns have been constituted, and old names have been altered, while some meetings have also been removed, a little explanation is necessary. The Baptist church in Litchfield was the first in Watertown, and Roxbury was once called South Britain, while the names of the other seven remain as they were. Some of their ministers have removed from place to place. Elder Elisha Ransom was at Watertown in 1790, who before and since has been at Woodstock, in Vermont. Elder Stephen Shepard was at Torrington in 1790, who is now at East Hartford. Elder Isaac Roots was at Warren in 1790, and at the second in Watertown in 1793, but at no church in that Association in 1795. Elder Nathaniel Norton was at Danbury in 1790, and at Wallingford in 1791, but out of that Association since. In new churches, and in changes of sentiments, men are often more unsteady than when they obtain more clear establishment. Though travelling ministers, if they are wise and faithful, have done much good in every age; while deceitful teachers, whether supported by law, or travelling through the world, have done infinite evils to mankind.

#### COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX.

There were some Baptists in Saybrook as early as 1729, who then complied with the certificate law, to exempt them from taxes to established ministers, as Dr. Stiles informed me. In January, 1744, Elder Timothy Peckom visited them, and baptized some persons on a Lord's day, when

the water of a brook was raised for the purpose. For these things he and a number more were imprisoned at New London, one of whom was a woman with a child at her breast. Mr. Elnathan Wilcox was a minister in the church there for a number of years before 1770, but in 1780 he was settled at Stockbridge. Elder Lester, from New London, was settled at Saybrook afterwards, and remains there. But in 1788, a number drew off and formed another church, and ordained Mr. William Hill as their pastor, and they are connected with the Groton Conference. The other Baptist churches in this county belong to the Stonington Association, and their state has been given from their Minutes. Abraham Doolittle, of Middletown, went to the Separate meeting there for some years, to hear Mr. Ebenezer Frothingham preach, who was first ordained at Wethersfield, October 28, 1747, but removed his meeting to Middletown a few years after. But as Mr. Doolittle embraced the Baptist sentiments, Frothingham openly and frequently prayed and preached against them, and then published a bitter pamphlet upon the subject; therefore Doolittle and his friends withdrew and set up a meeting by themselves in 1769, and Mr. Seth Higby, who married his daughter, began to preach there, who went afterwards to Stratfield, as was before related. Doolittle is a member of a Baptist church in Wallingford. But about the year 1781, Mr. Frothingham was rejected by his church, and they ordained Mr. Stephen Parsons in his stead, who was well esteemed in his place, until he was constrained to give up infant baptism, and was baptized, with about fifteen of his church, in the close of the summer of 1795; so that a Baptist church is like to be settled there soon.

#### COUNTY OF TOLLAND.

A Baptist church was formed in Tolland, and Mr. Shubael Stearns was ordained therein, March 20, 1751, by the assistance of the elders Wait Palmer and Joshua Morse. But in July, 1754, Stearns baptized Mr. Noah Alden, of Stratford, and he set off the next month, with others, to go into our southern governments. And Stearns wrote to Alden, from Hampshire county, in Virginia, June 13, 1755, and informed him that some of their company were then settled in North Carolina, who said to him in a letter, "that there was no established meeting within a hundred miles of them, and that the people were so eager to hear, that they often came forty miles each way, when they could have an opportunity to hear a sermon." He went himself and gathered a Baptist church on Sandy Creek, Orange county, North Carolina. When I was in Virginia in 1789, I saw a record of the beginning of their Associations, and was informed that Daniel Marshall baptized Samuel Harris, who had been a member of their legislature, and a judge of court in Virginia. Their first Association met in January, 1760, and they met again in July that year, when the list of their churches



stood thus, including both meetings. Sandy Creek, Elder Shubael Stearns ; Deep River, Nathaniel Powel, a brother ; Abbot's-Creek, Elder Daniel Marshall ; Little River, Joseph Breed, a brother ; Neuse River, Ezekiel Hunter ; Black River, John Newton ; Dan River, Pittsylvania county, Elder Samuel Harris ; Lunenburg county, William Murphey. The two last are in Virginia, the rest are in North Carolina. Elder Stearns wrote again to Elder Alden, from Sandy Creek, October 16, 1765, and said, "The Lord carries on his work gloriously in sundry places in this province, and in Virginia, and South Carolina." And he labored in those parts as long as he lived ; but Marshall went and gathered the first Baptist church in Georgia, whereof his son, Abraham Marshall, is pastor. And it appears by the Minutes of their Association in 1792, that they had fifty-six churches, and three thousand seven hundred and ninety-six members in the State of Georgia. How wonderful are these events ! They who were left of the church in Tolland, joined with others in Stafford, and ordained Mr. Alden as their pastor, June 5, 1755, and he labored with them ten years, and then such disorders had crept into the church, that he was dismissed by the advice of a council, as was before observed. They have passed through various changes since, and their present state is given above. A Separate church was formed in Somers about 1751, and Mr. Joseph Marshall was ordained their pastor, who soon became a Baptist, and then turned back to infant baptism, and he was installed at Canterbury, successor to Mr. Paine ; but after a few years he was dismissed, and has preached about the country ever since, without taking the charge of any other flock. But we are informed that a Baptist church was constituted in Somers in 1790, and that Mr. Seth Parsons is since ordained their pastor. Mr. Lillebridge, the pastor of the Baptist church in Willington, came from the State of Rhode Island, and is esteemed in his place. But I have no further accounts of that church, nor of the other Baptists in the county of Tolland, that appear to be serviceable to the public, than what are already given.



## CHAPTER XLIII.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.—COUNTY OF ROCKINGHAM.

A GENERAL VIEW OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.—OF NEWTON.—BRENTWOOD AND ITS BRANCHES.—SALEM.—NORTHWOOD.—COUNTY OF STRAFFORD.—WEARE, HOPKINTON, SUTTON, MASON AND HOLLIS.—NEW LONDON AND SALISBURY.—RICHMOND.—WESTMORELAND, MARLOW, NEWPORT AND OTHERS.—COUNTY OF GRAFTON.—THE NATURE AND EFFECT OF GOOD PRINCIPLES.—OF THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST.

All the lands between Merrimack and Piscataqua rivers, and sixty miles into the country, were granted to Captain John Mason, in 1629, under the name of New Hampshire. But the Massachusetts charter extended three miles north of Merrimack River, and Mason, with his heirs or assigns, claimed all the rest of those lands; and this was the cause why New Hampshire was not included in the second charter to the Massachusetts, in 1691, as Georges's grant was, which this government had purchased of his heirs. None of the lands within this grant, nor from thence to Connecticut River, were ever the free property of the people, so as to be granted by their representatives, before the late American war; and quit-rents were reserved upon the lands which were granted by their governors, until the American revolution put an end to them. Dr. Belknap has given a clear view of these things, in his elegant History of New Hampshire. And as the governors and counsellors of that government were appointed by the crown, the Congregational denomination were never exalted so high above all others there, as they have been in Massachusetts and Connecticut; and since the revolution, if the majority of any town elect a Baptist teacher for their minister, he may have the privilege of the lands therein which were granted for the ministry, and also may be supported by tax if he will. And the Baptists increased so much in the year 1780, that a minister of Rowley published a letter against them, in a Boston paper of February 8, 1781, in which he said:—

Alas, the consequence of the prevalence of this sect! They cause divisions everywhere. In the State of New Hampshire, where there are



many new towns, infant settlements, if this sect gets footing among them, they hinder, and are like to hinder, their settling and supporting learned, pious and orthodox ministers; and so the poor inhabitants of those towns must live, who knows how long? without the ministry of the gospel, and gospel ordinances.

As if the gospel and gospel ordinances, were confined to the Congregational party. Yea, he said to the Baptists:—

You have had two grand conventions (the second of them upon adjournment) within a few months past, at a town in the State of New Hampshire, to serve and promote this cause; at which conventions, these illiterate and unskilful preachers, and delegates from your little churches around, were members. And one thing I heard of as a part of your business at said convention, was, to consult what measures you should take to make void in part our new constitution of government; that part of it which respects the public worship of God.

But all the pretence he could have for this representation, was because the Warren Association met in September, 1780, at Royalstoue, which adjoins New Hampshire, and after it was over, the church there agreed to call a council the next month, for advice upon some difficulties among themselves, and not upon the concerns of the government. Though as three men of the Harvard society had been imprisoned at Worcester, and others were daily exposed to the same sufferings, for taxes to Congregational ministers, the Warren Association drew up a testimony against such oppression, in their said meeting, and printed many copies of it, which were sent into all parts of the government, and were signed by many hundreds of men, of various denominations. And is it a crime for any men who are oppressed, to expose the iniquity of their oppressors, and openly to testify against the same?

The first Baptist church that was formed in New Hampshire, was at Newton, northward of Haverhill, in 1755. In June that year, Mr. Walter Powers was ordained their pastor, and they increased under his ministry for some years; but then different sentiments about church discipline, with unhappy tempers in controversies, caused such difficulties, that a council of four churches was called, May 18, 1761, and held four days, without being able to reconcile pastor and people.<sup>1</sup> And he was afterwards dismissed and removed away, and is since dead; but his son is a useful minister at Gilmanton. This church at Newton labored through many difficulties, until

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Backus has preserved full minutes of this council, of which he was Moderator. Many accusations were made on both sides, and both pastor and people were censured, the former with most severity. He afterwards presented a confession, but the church were not satisfied with it, and excluded him. He went to Middleborough and submitted his confession to Mr. Baekus and his church, and they judged it sufficient. It may be inferred from the next sentence of the paragraph above, that the church afterwards restored him.—ED.

a Baptist church was formed in Haverhill, in 1765, and then many of the members joined there, and this church was dissolved. But the main body of the inhabitants of Newton, have lately come so much into the Baptist sentiments, that they prevailed with Mr. John Peak, who had been preaching at Cambridge and Woburn, to remove there in the fall of 1795, and a Baptist church was formed here in February, 1796. He was born at Walpole, in this State, September 26, 1761, was ordained at Windsor, in Vermont, and has been a successful preacher in various parts of the country.

The revival of religion in 1764, spread into several towns in New Hampshire, and the doctrine of believers' baptism followed it, until Mr. Smith, of Haverhill, was sent for, and he baptized thirty-eight persons in a week, in June, 1770. Fourteen of them were the Congregational minister and majority of his church in Deerfield, who were settled as a Baptist church the same month. Mr. Eliphalet Smith was their pastor, who is now at Fayette, in the county of Lincoln, before spoken of. A Baptist church was formed at Stratham, July 18, 1770, of fourteen members, and another at Brentwood of thirteen members, May 2, 1771, and one of sixteen members was constituted at Nottingham the next day; and these churches unitedly called Mr. Samuel Shepard to receive ordination, and he was ordained at Stratham, September 25, 1771, when Dr. Stillman preached the sermon, Mr. Smith, of Haverhill, gave the charge, and Dr. Manning, of Providence, the right hand of fellowship. Mr. Shepard was born at Salisbury, near Newbury, in 1739, was early changed by grace, and was a useful physician, before he was baptized in June, and began to preach in July, 1770. These three churches have united as one, and others have joined with them from other places, so that they had one hundred and sixty-one members in 1785; and though they did not increase for five years after, yet such a blessing was then granted that they had three hundred and ninety-seven members in 1792, and five hundred and twenty-six in 1793. And one hundred and twenty-one were dismissed the next year, though they have a large number now. Mr. Joshua Smith was of this church, who labored much in various places, with considerable success, until he died with a consumption in February, 1795. Elder Samuel Currier was also of this church, who is now ordained at Wentworth. Elder Shepard has travelled and labored much in our new towns, especially in 1780.<sup>1</sup> And he has since published several books in defence of our sentiments.

A Baptist church was formed at Salem, in this county, in 1780, and Mr. Samuel Fletcher was ordained their pastor, December 6, 1781. He was born in the county of Middlesex, in August, 1747, born again in 1767, and began to preach in 1777. He was called to preach at Chelmsford in the spring of 1778, and preached there the main of the time for two years, and his labors were also very successful in several other places, which appeared

<sup>1</sup>See p. 280.

to be the cause of his meeting with uncommon abuse in one place. For being called to Pepperell, in company with Dr. Parker, of Harvard, they met by the side of a river, for the conveniency of baptizing, within an inclosed field; but while Mr. Fletcher was preaching, a large mob broke into the field, and interrupted him in his sermon, while a dog was carried and plunged in the river, in evident contempt of our mode of baptism. The chief officers of the town were leaders of the mob; therefore a gentleman invited these ministers to go and hold their meeting at his house, near another river, and they did so, and Fletcher went through with his sermon, after which two dogs more were dipped in that river, and one young man also dipped his companion, in a most scornful manner, and some officers of the town advised said ministers to depart immediately out of town for their own safety. But they privately agreed with their friends to disperse, and they met at another place of water, and baptized six persons near night, though further abuse was offered them afterwards.<sup>1</sup> Elder Fletcher continued a faithful pastor of this church, until he was taken away by death in March, 1795, when his corpse was carried to the Congregational meeting house in Salem, where a Baptist minister preached a funeral sermon for him, and then several Congregational ministers were his pall bearers, with others of his own denomination.

The Baptist church in Northwood was also formed in 1780, and Mr. Edmund Pillsbury was ordained their pastor, who had been a member of Haverhill church. They had forty-four members in 1785, but had no increase for five years after, and then such a blessing was granted that seventy members were added in two years, and they appear to be in harmony. But after two churches were formed, in two parts of Canterbury in this county, in 1779 and 1780, some corrupt teachers drew away a number of them, and those churches, as well as one in Chichester, are not among our associated churches, if they are not entirely scattered and dissolved. For although parishes that are formed and supported by the civil magistrate, will continue as long as that power can uphold them, yet churches that are formed by the laws of Christ, are removed out of their places if they leave their first love, and refuse to repent. Rev. ii. 1—5. Which is a solemn warning to all mankind.

#### COUNTY OF STRAFFORD.

The Baptist church in Gilmanton was formed in 1772, and Mr. Walter Powers was ordained their pastor about four years after. In 1789 they had thirty members, in 1792 they had forty-four, and in three years they increased to seventy-six. The church in Meredith was formed in 1780, when forty-three persons were baptized in one day by Elder Shepard. Mr. Nicholas Folsom was ordained their pastor in 1782, who went from Brent-

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 220—222.



wood, and continues in that office. Their Association began in 1789. The church in Sanbornton was also formed in 1780, and Mr. John Crocket was ordained their pastor September 3, 1794. The church in Sandwich was formed in 1793, and Mr. Jacob Jewel is their pastor. Madbury contains a part of Berwick church, and we have no late account of any other Baptist church in this county.

## COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH.

A Baptist church was formed at Weare, and they joined with the Warren Association in 1768, when Mr. Pelatiah Tingley was their messenger. In 1770, they had sixteen members, but such unhappy controversies arose among them, that they sent no more to the Association, and they were left out of it in 1774. But they were revived again in 1783, and Mr. Amos Wood, who graduated at Rhode Island College in 1786, was ordained their pastor, and has continued so ever since. The town of Hopkinton is not far from Weare, and such a work took place there, under the preaching of Mr. Smith, of Haverhill, and others, that they had seventeen baptized persons among them in 1769, and they joined as a branch of Haverhill church, until they were dismissed and formed a church in Hopkinton, in May, 1771. But false teachers and corrupt principles prevailed so much among them afterwards, as to dissolve their church. Though Elder Seamans, in a letter to a friend, in 1794, gave the following account of a revival among them:—

Soon after I came into this wilderness I found that the Baptist interest was much smaller than I expected. In Hopkinton, there had been a Baptist church, but not one stone of that building was left upon another. I preached some there, and baptized three persons; and after a conference or two with them, they came into church state, adopted our articles of faith, and I administered the communion to them, which they had not had for a number of years. The reformation began there in the summer of 1792, and now there is a church there, with its two branches in Bow and Goffstown, of one hundred and thirteen members; a very respectable body of Christians.

This was their state in 1794, and they have since obtained Elder Elisha Andrews to be their pastor. There had been some Baptists in Temple for seventeen years, even from the beginning of that plantation, until they formed a church there, August 21, 1782, of twenty-two members. Another had been formed the April before in Perryston, now Sutton, and Mr. Samuel Ambrose was ordained their pastor in September after. The church in Mason, formed in 1786, obtained Mr. William Elliott for their minister, but we are informed that he labors part of his time at Hollis, where a Baptist church was formed in 1791.

We have a more particular account of two other churches in this county. The first is at New London, where Elder Seamans removed from Attle-

borough in 1788. As he was the first minister of the town, they gave him the lands which were granted for the ministry therein, and also supported him by a tax. A Baptist church was formed there in 1788, and he settled as their pastor, but they had very little increase for four years; and he had many fears that he took a wrong step in removing from Attleborough, although he then thought he had good reasons for it. These fears were very distressing to his mind, until a blessing was granted upon his ministry in 1792, which appeared the most visible in and after August in that year. In a letter to a friend,<sup>1</sup> of January 29, 1793, he said:—

This town consists of about fifty families, and I hope that between forty and fifty souls have been translated out of darkness into God's marvellous light, in this town, besides a number in Sutton and Fisherfield, who congregate with us. Fifteen have been baptized, and joined to the church, and I expect that a number more will come forward in a short time. Indeed I know not of one of them but what is likely to submit to gospel order, nor one person in the town who stands in any considerable opposition. We have lectures or conferences almost every day or evening in the week. Our very children meet together to converse and pray with each other; and I believe I may safely say, that our young people were never a quarter so much engaged in frolicking, as they now are in the great concerns of the soul and eternity. Some things in this work have exceeded any thing I ever saw before. Their convictions have usually been very clear and powerful, so that industrious men and women have had neither inclination nor strength to follow their business as usual. And they freely acknowledge the justice and sovereignty of God. They also have desires beyond what I have ever before known, for the universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

And in another letter, December 1, 1794, directed to another friend, he said:—

The work began here in 1792; our church then consisted of eighteen members, and now we have one hundred and fifteen, all except three or four within five miles of our meeting-house. Some of all ages from seventy down to eight years old have joined to the church. I think we have thirty-seven men with their wives in the church.

The town of Salisbury, upon the great road from Boston to Dartmouth College, is not far from him; and a number of men in that town were of the Baptist sentiments, and built a good meeting house there, when there was hardly a baptized person among them. Elder Seamans was called to preach among them in 1792, and he says in said letter:—

A number wanted to have a Baptist church constituted, as they intended to have a Baptist minister. But I told them that there must be something done amongst them which man could not do, before a Baptist church could be gathered there. And this work the Lord begun about the same time as at Hopkinton, and now there is a flourishing church there of one hundred and twenty-five members, with a fine preacher.

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Backus himself.—ED.

Mr. Elias Smith, who came from Connecticut, and preached in many places, and was ordained as a travelling minister, is settled as their pastor.

COUNTY OF CHESHIRE.

A Baptist church was formed in Richmond, and Mr. Matturean Ballou was ordained their pastor, September 27, 1770, being the first minister of any denomination in the town. They joined to the Warren Association in 1771, when they informed the Association, that a number of the inhabitants were unwilling to allow their minister the privileges of the first minister of the town, and that neighboring towns would not regard the certificates which they gave to some of their society who lived therein.<sup>1</sup> Their church had then twenty-nine members, and they increased to seventy-nine in three years; and then they were in a low condition for six years after, until the revival in 1780 caused the addition of forty-four in three years more. In the mean time a division took place among them, and another church was formed, in which Mr. Artemas Aldrich was ordained. And they were in broken circumstances, until another revival began in 1790, which caused the addition of one hundred and six members in about two years, and their two ministers were dismissed, and the two churches united, with Mr. Isaac Kenney for their pastor. In 1794 they were dismissed to the Leyden Association.

Many of the inhabitants of Westmoreland went from the first Baptist society in Middleborough, and they formed a Baptist church there in 1771,

<sup>1</sup>The following is an extract from their letter:—

"We request some special advice on several occasions, for we are young in such cases, for we meet with great opposition in our province, and the main point of their objection is, they say our settlement is not according to law, so that they threaten to pay no regard to our certificates given to our brethren living in other towns. Another particular is, it is so ordered in our charter by the king's grant, that one whole share of land shall be given to the church of England, one whole share to the incorporated society to propagate the gospel in foreign parts, and one whole share to the first settled minister of the gospel in said town. These are the express words in the charter of our town. Our elder being the first, we think it belongs to him, but being opposed by the inhabitants of the town of other denominations, we ask your advice, what we had best do. Further, there are a number of brethren in the town of Rindge, in our province, who are embodied in church state, with government and articles of faith agreeable to ours, and are under our care to assist them in administering the ordinances of the gospel. These brethren have suffered much by the inhabitants of their town, who have taken away their cattle and sold them at the post for their minister's rates, and they are threatened still to be used in like manner. They require us to make request for them, what they had best do."

It appears from this extract that a Baptist church had been organized in Rindge as early as 1771, though it is not noticed by Backus. In relation to the church in Richmond, see a letter of James Manning to Hezekiah Smith, in Manning and Brown University, p. 186.—Ed.



and Mr. Ebenezer Bayley was ordained their pastor, November 30, 1773. But after some years a division took place among them, and another church was formed, in which Mr. Nathaniel Wilbore preached, though he is not ordained. Another church was formed in Marlow in 1777, and Mr. Eleazar Beckwith was ordained their pastor, and so continues. He and many of his people went from Lyme, in Connecticut. Mr. Caleb Blood was ordained therein in October, 1777, who is now at Shaftsbury. When this church joined to the Woodstock Association in 1786, they had one hundred and eighteen members, and in 1790 they had one hundred and eighty-four. A Baptist church was formed at Croyden in 1778, and in 1790 they joined with Newport, and settled Elder Biel Ledoyt as their pastor, who went from Woodstock in Connecticut. And a revival of religion began among them in June, 1793, by means of an alarming providence. For the eldest son of Mr. Seamans, a lovely youth, came to assist in raising the frame of a meeting-house at Newport, but he fell from the top of it, and died soon. The affliction was exceeding great to his parents, and very alarming to others, which the Spirit of God made use of for their good. And on September 16, 1793, Mr. Ledoyt said in a letter to a friend :—

It hath been a long, dark, and cloudy night with me, and the people here ; but glory to our God, the cloud is dispersing fast. His work is begun among us ; Newport and Croyden are greatly blessed. There have been forty souls hopefully converted in a few weeks among us. I have baptized twenty-nine in four weeks. The work appears still going on. I cannot be idle, it is out of my power to answer all the calls I have at this time ; but I endeavor to do all I can. Being favored with health, and the spirit of preaching, I ascend the mountains easy. There is a prospect of a glorious reformation in these parts. O may it spread far and wide ! God hath remembered my family also for good ; my three eldest daughters, I hope, are converted ; the oldest, seventeen years, and the youngest, ten years old, are baptized. O bless the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I never more sensibly needed wisdom than at present. You will not cease to pray for me. O, dear brother, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

I must leave the rest of the churches in this county, as they appear in the foregoing list.

#### COUNTY OF GRAFTON.

The first Baptist church in this county, was formed at Lebanon, in June, 1771, and Mr. Jedidiah Hubbard was ordained therein in 1784. But so many of them removed to other places, that in 1790 they concluded that the church was dissolved. Elder Hubbard has since been pastor of the church in Cornish. A Baptist church was formed in Canaan in 1783, wherein Elder Baldwin was ordained, and he ministered to them until he removed to Boston in 1790. Many of the inhabitants of Grafton went from Rehoboth and Swansea, and they formed a Baptist church there in

1785, and Mr. Oliver Williams was ordained their pastor, and continued so until he died in a joyful manner, August 15, 1790, aged thirty-nine. He went from the State of Rhode Island, and probably was one of the posterity of Mr. Roger Williams, the founder of that State. The church in Rumney was formed in 1780, and Mr. Cotton Hains was ordained their pastor in August that year. The church in Holderness was formed the same year, and Mr. Jeremiah Ward is their pastor. The rest of the Baptist churches in this county appear in the foregoing list, of which I have not received so full accounts as I expected. But I have some things of a more extensive nature, concerning this part of the country, which may be beneficial to the public.

Dr. Eleazar Wheelock was settled in the ministry, in the west part of Lebanon, in Connecticut, and was acquainted with experimental religion before Mr. Whitefield came into our country; and he was an active and successful laborer in the reformation that followed, until the work was much abated, and then he turned his attention to the instruction of the Indians, in order to spread the gospel among them; which led on to the forming of Dartmouth College, which was established in Hanover, in this county, to which he removed in the summer of 1770. Some revival of religion was granted in this wilderness soon after, and things looked encouraging until war broke out in our land, which tried the hearts of all. And as a quantity of money for this college had been collected in England and Scotland, which was put into a fund in London, from whence the interest was to be drawn annually, some imagined that Dr. Wheelock was biased in favor of Britain in the war, which occasioned the following actions:—He lived so remote from the seat of their government, that proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings sometimes failed of reaching him until the days appointed were past; and as Connecticut government had appointed November 16, 1775, for their annual thanksgiving, of which he had received an account, he and his people kept that day. But in the week following he received a proclamation from the authority of his own government, which appointed another day a fortnight after the other; and he was willing that all who had not kept the former day should keep the latter, while he could not in conscience keep two thanksgivings in that season, only to obey the commandments of men. Yet because he refused to do it, he was threatened to be prosecuted by authority, therefore he preached a sermon on said day, from John xviii. 36, and published it to the world, under the title of Liberty of Conscience; or, No King but Christ in his Church. He observed that rulers have only power to propose the keeping of such days, and to protect all in their worship from being injured by others, while the consent of the people to keep the day, is the only thing that can make it binding upon them to do it. And he says:—

When civil power encroaches an inch upon Christ's prerogative, a sancti-

fied and enlightened conscience can never be compelled to a compliance; and if they are of the truth, and hear Christ's voice, no instruments of cruelty will avail any thing in this attempt. . . . The least yielding in this case is dangerous, and a direct and leading step to a flood of persecution, however remote it may seem at present.<sup>1</sup>

Yea, and supporting religious teachers by compulsion has been a greater source of persecution, than a compelling of people to keep days of fasting or thanksgiving ever was. Of this Mr. Eden Burroughs, pastor of the church in Hanover, became so sensible that he gave up the practice. He had been a minister in Connecticut, and he was so much affected with a view of the corruption of their churches, that he published a discourse in 1784, from those words, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?* And he plainly shews that the conduct of men, be it in obedience to the laws of Christ, or in conformity to the world, is the language which speaks the loudest in all rational minds, and much more to the Son of God. And he says:—

If the confidence of professing Christians one towards another is not founded upon a mutual apprehension that each other is governed by a sacred regard to what Christ has said and enjoined in his word, there is no Christian confidence, and consequently no Christian charity amongst them. . . . And it is absolutely impossible for professing Christians to have this mutual confidence towards each other, while they see that they are so commonly disposed to bite and devour one another, by seeking to get the advantage of each other, in their commerce and dealings; or to slander, backbite, and reproach one another; or to be unfaithful in fulfilling their promises and engagements to each other; or to be insensible of the wants and distresses of each other.

Again he says:—

There is nothing that can have such a tendency to prejudice the minds and harden the hearts of men against the truth, as, on the one hand to hold it up to view as being of the most sacred and weighty importance, and on the other hand to trifle with it in our daily practice. And this one observation is sufficient to account for that flood of deism and infidelity that so awfully threatens to deluge the land. It is in vain for professing Christians to call upon mankind to believe that which it is evident, by their daily practice, they do not believe themselves. . . . Those corporations who call themselves churches of Christ, whilst they refuse to put the laws of his kingdom into execution, and will suffer them to be trampled under foot, are more awfully guilty of the blood of souls than every other set of men under heaven.<sup>2</sup>

These things caused many controversies among their churches, as well as moved many to withdraw from them. And we are informed that Elder Seamans has found it to be such a bondage to be supported by tax and compulsion, that he has already renounced that practice.

<sup>1</sup>Wheelock's Sermon, p. 26. <sup>2</sup>Burroughs on the Laws of Christ, pp. 14, 67, 68.



A foundation doctrine of Christianity was also openly struck against in this part of our country, even the atonement of Christ. For a minister of Newport published three sermons in 1786, to prove that all the sufferings of Christ were from wicked men and devils, and that God never inflicted any punishment at all upon him for the sins of men; but that the whole of the atonement of Christ was his good teaching and good example in life and death. His first argument for this opinion is this:—"Nothing could merit favor for sinners, which was not in itself agreeable to the divine mind." And having proved that God has no pleasure in the death of sinners, he says, "Reason forbids the conclusion, that he should have any pleasure in the sufferings of his dutiful and well beloved Son."<sup>1</sup> But we ought to know, that the favor and love of God never could be purchased; for it was his love that caused him to give his Son to suffer the curse of the law, that God might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Rom. iii. 24—27. And if men deny that God could have any pleasure in the death of his Son, yet he says, It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Is. liii. 10, 11. Christ loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. Eph. v. 2. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Heb. vii. 25. Yet this author, in his second argument, says, "If this great work could not be finished until divine justice had its free and natural course, in such a sense, as that his sufferings are to be considered as sin punished; the consequence is unavoidable, that he in a *very short season* endured the same quantity of misery which would have borne sinners down to eternity. A thought which exceeds all rules of computation, and departs from all principles of just reasoning." As if the Son of God could not do more in a short time, than sinful men can ever do. Man was first drawn into rebellion against God, by setting up reason above revelation; and the world is still held in bondage by the same means. Yet our author says, "Let no one be alarmed, if we positively deny, that he suffered any of that divine wrath which sinners justly deserve; for there can no such contradictory idea exist, that a being should be *angry* with an object with which he is at the same time *well pleased*."<sup>2</sup> But how weak is this reasoning! For a parent cannot correct a child as he ought, if he is angry with the child; neither can a judge give

<sup>1</sup>Remele on Atonement, p. 19.<sup>2</sup>Ibid, pp. 21. 33.

sentence against a debtor, or a criminal, if he feels angry with them. And when a surety freely engages to pay the debt of another, justice as clearly exacts the debt of him as of the debtor, while the discharge of the debtor is as great a mercy as it would have been if the creditor had forgiven him without a surety. And when a sinner is convinced of the greatness of his debt, and God frankly forgives him all, the sinner will love him much. Luke vii. 41, 42, 47. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again. .... Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are past away, behold, all things are become new. II Cor. v. 14—17. Fear and love are the great principles of all voluntary actions, and they were divided by the fall; but Christ took on him flesh and blood, of the seed of Abraham, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. Heb. ii. 14—15. And herein the promise of God to Abraham was accomplished, who said, My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. Gen. xvii. 13. For Christ was given for a covenant of the people, and for a light of the Gentiles. Is. xlii. 6.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### STATE OF VERMONT.—COUNTY OF BENNINGTON.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE PLANTING OF VERMONT.—OF SHAFTSBURY CHURCHES.—POWNAI AND OTHERS.—WOODSTOCK AND BRIDGEWATER. A VIEW OF OPPRESSION IN VERMONT.—AND OF FASTING FOR STRIFE AND DEBATE IN THE MASSACHUSETTS.—THE MINORITY ARE USING FORCE WITH THE MAJORITY ABOUT RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

The royal prophet says, Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee ; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain. And this truth shines with great clearness in our day, and as clearly in Vermont, as in any part of our country. All the lands therein were once claimed by the government of New Hampshire, and Bennington was named from Benning Wentworth, the Governor, who granted the town. He also granted a large number of other towns on the west side of Connecticut River, and made much money thereby, until some politicians of New York obtained an act of the king in council, in 1764, to annex all those lands to their government. Many of those who had purchased lands of Wentworth, had made large improvements thereon ; and to have all their property taken away deceitfully, or to buy it again of men whose government they disliked, raised a high degree of resentment against them ; and the controversy was pursued for ten years, which produced a hardy set of men, who did great exploits in the American war, in the time of which they formed themselves into a distinct government, and they are now owned as one of our United States.<sup>1</sup> The folly of many in Connecticut and the Massachusetts, who ran into debt at the close of the wars in 1763 and 1783, caused the planting of the wilderness in New Hampshire and Vermont, beyond what human wisdom could possibly have done. The Massachusetts had made some beginnings at Northfield before the war which began in 1675, and we are well informed that there was not one English family settled above Number Four, about

<sup>1</sup>Belknap's History of New Hampshire, Vol. II, pp. 314--316, 455.



fifty miles from Northfield, until the peace in 1763. In all that time the French and English were contending with each other about lands which neither of them had any right to, and were employing the savages in their quarrels, until the French gave up their claim to this continent. And then Britain engaged in the cruel design of enslaving her own subjects, and forced them to renounce their power, and the French assisted them in obtaining their liberty, and thereby learned how to assert their own rights; upon which Britain has deluged their land with blood, to prevent the prevalence of light and liberty in Europe. Popery is abolished in France, much more than it is in England, and this has raised the cry of many teachers and lawyers against them, representing them as bloody infidels! But we ever should remember, that hypocrites were much more fierce for the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ than heathen infidels were; and they are ever so against true religion and liberty. And can men be blinded by them any longer? For God sent such a drought and scarcity into Canada in 1795, as compelled them to have recourse to Vermont and New Hampshire for food for man and beast, where they had a plenty of both. Yea, England herself now wants food from America, where they have cruelly oppressed the inhabitants heretofore.

The first Baptist church in Vermont was formed in Shaftsbury in 1768. Mr. Bliss Willoughby, who was ordained pastor of a Separate church at Newent, in Norwich, in 1753, and went to England as an agent for their churches in 1756, and preached for Dr. Gifford, in London, became a Baptist after the year 1764, and was a leader among this people, where his son Ebenezer has also been a teacher, though neither of them have been pastors of this church. On August 4, 1774, the church wrote that they had thirty-nine members, twenty-one of whom were males. But how things were among them for six years after, we know not. A second church was formed in 1780, and a third in 1781, the last of them upon the principles of the old Baptists, who held laying on of hands upon every member as a term of communion. And the Association which was begun there in 1781, and has united a large number of other churches, yet has not united all these in the town where it begun. But to promote union among them, many of the brethren sent an earnest request to Mr. Caleb Blood, of Newton, and he removed there in the beginning of 1788, when a fourth church was formed, which had one hundred and twenty-four members the next year, and one hundred and sixty in 1795. Mr. Blood is so much esteemed in their government, that he was called to preach their Election Sermon, October 11, 1792, which was published by their authority. One passage therein says:—

A wise magistrate will set a constant guard over the words of his mouth; that with a becoming moderation, he may express his resentment of injuries done him, and have all his language such as shall tend to prevent oth-

ers from an uncivil, profane way of treating their fellow citizens. A magistrate who is rough and profane in his language, is a monstrous character. He is not civil himself, and we cannot expect but that the practice, at least, will do hurt in the community. He is not the gentleman; for any person of sense knows that a rough, profane way of treating mankind, better fits the character of a clown than a gentleman. Can I suppose myself in danger of giving offence? No; I cannot think that so respectable a body as I am now called to address, will think me too severe in censuring so great an evil; especially seeing it so much prevails in our land at the present day.<sup>1</sup>

After the settlement of Pownal, the people lived for some time in a very careless way, neglecting public worship, and indulging themselves in all kinds of vanity and iniquity, until they were visited with distressing sickness, in March, 1773, which alarmed their consciences, and they set up the worship of God among them, and the Spirit of God fixed conviction in many minds, and about two hundred often attended their meetings. A church was formed in April, which increased to forty-nine members in fifteen months. This is a summary of the account which the church gave in July, 1774. How things were among them for ten years after, we know not; but in the spring of 1788, Elder Caleb Nichols removed there, having been dismissed from the church in Coventry, and this church joined the Shaftsbury Association in 1793, when they had seventy-two members; and such a blessing was granted there, that they increased to one hundred and sixty-five in two years. I must leave the other churches in this county as they appear in the foregoing list.

#### COUNTY OF WINDSOR.

As people removed very fast into this county towards the close of the war, several Baptist ministers were sent to preach among them from year to year. In May, 1779, our elders Seamans and Ledoyt visited those parts, and labored in various places to good purpose. And Mr. Elisha Ransom, who was ordained at Sutton, November 11, 1778, as a travelling minister, removed up to Woodstock, where a Baptist church was formed in July, 1780, and he became their minister. He came as one of their messengers, and joined the Warren Association in September following, when they had twenty-eight members. And in three years they increased to eighty members, when, in February, 1783, they joined with three other churches in forming the Woodstock Association, to which a fifth church joined that year, and opened a correspondence with the Warren Association, which has continued ever since. In three years the Association increased to fourteen churches, and four hundred and ninety-six members. These churches were those of Woodstock, Canaan, Croyden, Sutton, Wendel, Lebanon, Royalton, second in Woodstock, Claremont, Temple, Windsor, Westminster,

<sup>1</sup>Blood's Sermon, pp. 32, 33.

Westmoreland and Marlow. Mr. Joel Butler was ordained in Woodstock, January 5, 1785, and ministered to their second church for some time, and then he labored in several places in the Massachusetts, from whence he removed into the State of New York. As the members of this church were chiefly dismissed from the first, they have since re-united in one again. Mr. William Grow, mentioned above, removed from Pomfret, in Connecticut, to Bridgewater, in Vermont, and recovered his credit so far, by a penitent and good behavior, that he was settled as the pastor of a church gathered in Woodstock and Bridgewater, and for two or three years they appeared to prosper; but then new difficulties arose, and he was dismissed. I find that Mr. John Peckens, who went from Middleborough, and who had been ordained at Claremont, was at Woodstock in 1786, who is now at Chelmsford. Mr. Joseph Call, was also an ordained elder there in 1789, who was at Cambridge in 1793. This work has spread into Canada, where a Baptist church was formed at Coldwell's Manor, which joined the Woodstock Association in 1794. And Elder Jedidiah Hebbard says, "I have been four journeys into those parts, and have seen much of the power and grace of God there."

Mr. Ransom has not only been a successful preacher of the gospel, but also has earnestly contended for Christian liberty, against the ministerial tyranny which has been carried into that wilderness, from the States of Connecticut and the Massachusetts. And on March 23, 1795, he said in a letter:—

A brother living in Hartford, in Vermont, belonging to Elder Drew's church, has suffered much about rates from another denomination. He was first carried to goal, and then came out by paying the money, and prosecuted them in vain, for he was beat three times. I cannot ascertain the costs, for his last trial was the last day of February past; but it is supposed that his costs will be above fifty pounds. Five petitions were carried into the Vermont Assembly last fall, with more than two hundred signers, against the certificate law, and I went to speak for them; and after my averment that the certificate law was contrary to the rights of man, of conscience, the first, third, fourth, and seventh articles of our constitution, and to itself, for it took away our rights, and then offered to sell them back to us for a certificate, some stretched their mouths; and though no man contradicted me in one argument, yet they would shut their eyes, and say they could not see it so. I had many great friends in the house, but not a majority. They sent out a committee who altered the law much for the better, if any law could be good of that kind, which was, that every man might assert his own sentiments to the town clerk, and that should answer; but because it would still be a bad law, and I would not thank them for it, and none of our friends would acknowledge it as a favor, it fell back to where it was before. Only we have this to comfort us, The Lord reigneth, and their power is limited, and we shall have no more affliction than is needful for us. Duty is ours, the event is the Lord's.

As I failed of obtaining more accounts of their churches, and of their suf-



ferings in Vermont, which were expected, I shall close this chapter with some late things in the Massachusetts, the mother of all the persecutions in New England.

God said to the church of Israel, Behold ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. . . . Wilt thou call this a fast, an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, and to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Isaiah lviii. 4—6. And is not this language applicable to our country? For dissenters from the established worship in New England were several times relieved from cruel oppression, by special acts of the British court. But when our first Congress was called at Philadelphia, in the fall of 1774, and they were like to be our highest power of government for the future, the Warren Association sent an agent there to try if some security for our religious rights could not be obtained, while we united with our countrymen in defence of the civil rights of America. And a conference was granted by the delegates in Congress from the Massachusetts, to whom the Baptist agent declared, that we wanted no more religious liberty in the country, than they had long enjoyed in Boston; and this appeared so reasonable to the gentlemen who were present, that said delegates promised to use their influence to obtain such liberty through all the country. Yet a report was spread in New England, before the Baptist agent got home, that he had been to Philadelphia on purpose to try to break the union of the colonies in the defence of their civil rights. Therefore he soon met the committee of the Warren Association at Boston, and presented an address to the Massachusetts Provincial Congress upon it, and they returned an answer in which they said :—

The establishment of civil and religious liberty, to each denomination in the province, is the sincere wish of this congress. But being by no means vested with powers of civil government, whereby they can redress the grievances of any person whatever, they therefore recommend to the Baptist churches, that when a General Assembly shall be convened in this colony, they lay the real grievances of said churches before the same, when and where their petition will most certainly meet with all that attention due to the memorial of a denomination of Christians so well disposed to the public weal of their country.<sup>1</sup>

Here they denied that they were vested with powers of civil government, while they assumed the whole power of government in the Massachusetts; and as a General Assembly was called in July, 1775, the Warren Association presented a memorial to them in September, which they slipped away out of sight, without granting any relief at all to the Baptists. And when the convention was called, which formed our new constitution, the first

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 200—204.—ED.

draft that was made by their committee, was wholly partial for one denomination. They met and chose the committee to make the draft in September, and then adjourned to October 28, 1779. A general fast was appointed upon the occasion on November 4; and though the Third Article was new drawn, with some appearance of favor to dissenters from their worship, yet as they expected opposition to it from the Baptists, two men, who were members of Congress in 1774, accused them of sending an agent then to Philadelphia to break the union of the colonies, and evidently carried the vote for the Third Article by inflaming the convention against them. And was not this a fasting for strife and debate, and smiting with the fist of wickedness? For the same men knew that they had promised to exert all their influence to obtain all the liberty that the Baptists asked for; but they have never fulfilled their promise to this day, although they have been in high offices in our government. And for any men to violate their promise, is to exalt themselves above the eternal God, who never failed of fulfilling any one promise, nor ever can. Yet all men in this government, who support one denomination by tax and compulsion, violate the promise in the constitution, which says, "Every denomination of Christians demeaning themselves peaceably, and as good subjects of the commonwealth, shall be equally under the protection of the law; and no subordination of any one sect or denomination to another, shall ever be established by law."

But as this has restrained our legislature from making any certificate law to exempt the dissenters from the Congregational denomination from taxes to their worship, and they have put the whole power into the hands of the majority of voters in each town or parish, this iniquity has no covering left among us. For ministers are supported by worldly men, who act without any sort of religious qualification, and therefore there is no religion in their doings. And they now violate the most essential rule of all civil government, which is, that the majority of every civil community is the body politic, and that the minority is not the body. Therefore Mr. Ellis was never elected as pastor of the first parish in Rehoboth,<sup>1</sup> from which many thousands of dollars have been taken for him; neither was Mr. Nathan Underwood ever elected the pastor of the second parish in Harwich, by the body of the parish, who have been all taxed to him. But Mr. Ellis's great success appears to have emboldened Mr. Underwood, and his collector seized six men who were Baptists, on the first day of December, 1795, and carried them as far as Yarmouth, where one of them was taken so ill, being old and infirm before, that he saw no way to save his life but to pay the tax and costs, which he did, and the other five were carried to

<sup>1</sup>Just before this work was finished at the press, news came from Rehoboth, that a number who had been zealous for Mr. Ellis have turned against him, so that he is gone off, not likely to return to be their minister any more.—B.

See pp. 354, 355, 442—445.—ED.

the prison at Barnstable, where they also paid the money, rather than to lie in a cold prison all winter. And these things moved many to pay said tax, rather than to be distrained upon. Though as all did not do it, their collector went with aid to the house of one of the Baptists, when he was not at home, January 8, 1796, and seized a cow for a tax to said minister; but his wife and daughter came out and took hold of the cow, and his wife promised to pay the money, if her husband would not do it, and they let the cow go, and she went to Mr. Underwood the next day, and paid the tax and costs, and took his receipt therefor. Yet four days after, the woman and two daughters, one of whom was not there when the cow was taken, were seized and carried before authority, and fined seven dollars for talking to the collector and his aid, and taking hold of the cow while they had her in possession, so that they let her go. These things we have had very distinct accounts of, and if there is the least mistake therein, let them point it out in welcome. Another instance in the county of Plymouth is similar to these in one respect, though not in others. The minister of a parish, lately incorporated, was never chosen by the majority of the inhabitants therein, nor by many who are taxed to him, one of whom was lately seized to be carried to prison, but he paid the money, and others are threatened with the like treatment. Before this distress was made for the salary of said minister, he got several Baptist ministers to preach in his pulpit, and seems to be in earnest to draw them into compulsive measures also. Yet the line of his parish was extended eight or nine miles from his meeting, in order to take in two valuable lots of ministerial lands, which lie near a Baptist meeting, where a Baptist minister is settled. These are a few of the evils which have come from the practice of confounding the church and world together, about the government of the church, and the support of religious ministers. Whereas if the civil government would protect all its subjects impartially, without supporting any ministers by tax and compulsion, all true believers would lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, and the power of other men to oppress them on religious accounts would be taken away.





## CHAPTER XLV.

### OBSERVATIONS ON THE FOREGOING HISTORY.

ANTICHRIST DESCRIBED, AND ALSO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.—THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, BELIEVED AND OBEYED BY THE CHILDREN OF GOD, ARE HIS TWO WITNESSES.—A BEING ANOINTED WITH THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, IS ESSENTIAL TO CHRISTIANITY.—EVIDENCE THAT THIS SPIRIT HATH LATELY INCREASED THE BAPTIST CHURCHES.—THE EVIL OF CONFOUNDING CHURCH AND WORLD TOGETHER.—THE GLORY OF HAVING THEM DISTINCT.—ALL MEN SHOULD ACT BY THE GOLDEN RULE.—THE GATES OF HELL CANNOT PREVAIL AGAINST SUCH.—FOR THEY STAND ON THE SEA OF GLASS MINGLED WITH FIRE.—HOW THE TWO WITNESSES ARE SLAIN.—AND HOW THEY SHALL RISE AGAIN.—MYSTERY BABYLON DESCRIBED.—AND THE NATURE OF HERESY.—MEN ARE KNOWN BY THEIR FRUITS.

How clearly has the word of God been fulfilled ! For he says, That day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition : who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work ; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way : and then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming : even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie ; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks

always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. II Thess. ii. 3—14. Here all men are described as in two parties. So our Lord says, Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God. John iii. 20, 21. It is impossible for God to violate his promise, or his oath, or to entice any into sin. Heb. vi. 13—18. James i. 13, 14. But all men are guilty of these evils, more or less, who are not born again. And when Constantine removed the seat of his empire from Rome, and then divided it at his death, the way was made for the bishop of Rome to exalt himself above God in his church, and above all the kings of Europe, who gave their power unto him. And forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, was held in that church for many centuries before Luther's reformation. I Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. Yet an external succession of baptisms, and of ministerial power, through all those abominations, is now held fast in our land, as we have before proved. Yea, and the doctrines of original sin, particular election, efficacious grace in conversion, justification wholly by faith in the perfect righteousness of Christ, and the final perseverance of his saints, are denied by multitudes in Europe and America. And are they not left to a strong delusion to believe a lie? For all the holy priesthood that God has under heaven are, *elect* according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. I Pet. i. 2. ii. 5, 9. Yet ministers and parents still imagine, that they can make children holy members of the church before they can choose for themselves, and holy ministers by an external succession of ordinations. And a minister before named<sup>1</sup> says, "When you re-baptize those in adult years, which we have baptized in their infancy, you and they jointly renounce that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whom we adore and worship as the only living and true God, and on whom we depend for all our salvation."<sup>2</sup> So some Jewish teachers said, Except ye be circumcised, after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. But the Holy Ghost, in the church at Jerusalem, said, Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? Acts xv. 1, 10. The Sinai covenant yoked believers and unbelievers together. And another minister says, "Some who are not inwardly sanctified, are yet so far in covenant, that they are rightful members of the visible church, as all but the Ana-

<sup>1</sup>See p. 315.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Huntington, the author of this, died in 1795, when it appeared that he had embraced the doctrine of universal salvation.



baptists must grant." And again he says, "It is certain that the rule of admission is such, that some, yea, many unsanctified persons may be, and are regularly admitted. All the congregation of Israel were admitted or recognized as members of the visible church by God himself at Mount Sinai; yet who will say that one in ten of them were saints in heart? The children of believers are reputed saints, and as such, have a right of admission; yet we are not sure that the greater part of them are inwardly sanctified from the womb, or even afterwards."<sup>1</sup> Yea, we are so far from seeing any evidence of inward sanctification in most of the children of professors, that they generally evidence the contrary in their lives as much as other men. And when the church of Israel were entering upon the promised land, Moses said, The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day. Deut. xxix. 4. So far was he from giving them any idea that all their national church were inwardly sanctified. But a little before the Babylonian captivity, it was said, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; *not according* to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. And this is the covenant upon which the gospel church is built. Heb. viii. 8—12. And it is as distinct from the covenant of circumcision with the nation of Israel, as Sarah was from Hagar, or Zion from Sinai; yea, as distinct as Jerusalem which is above, and is free, being the mother of all the children of God, is from Jerusalem below, which is in bondage with her children. Gal. iv. 22—26. And language cannot make a clearer distinction, than is here made, between the national covenant with Israel, and the covenant of grace with the church of Christ.

When the Jews returned from Babylon, and began to build the temple, their enemies sent false accusations against them to the court of Persia, and procured an order from thence to force them to cease from that work. But after another king came to the throne, two prophets were raised up, to reprove the Jews for their negligence, and to encourage them to finish the house of God. Ezra iv. 11—24. v. 1, 2. And because the old men wept to see how much inferior this house was, to the glorious temple which

<sup>1</sup>Hemmenway on the Church, pp. 29, 49.

was built by Solomon, one prophet said to them, I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts; according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. Hag. ii. 4—7. And after the Son of God came and taught in that house, as no man ever did before, and then offered himself a sacrifice to God for the sins of his people, and arose and ascended to Heaven, and gave the Holy Ghost from thence, to enable his ministers to preach the gospel to Jews and Gentiles, an inspired apostle said, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire. Heb. xii. 27—29. The other prophet had a candlestick all of gold, set before him, with mediums to convey oil into it for light; and upon his inquiry what was meant thereby, the answer was, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof, with shoutings, crying, *Grace, grace* unto it! Zech. iv. 1—7. And when they obeyed this call of God, their enemies wrote again to the court of Persia against them, but a decree in their favor was procured thereby, and all was plain before them. Ezra v. 7—17; vi. 1—16. The golden candlestick represented the church of God, and the two olive trees were his precepts and promises, whereby he poured the oil of his grace into his church, to hold up light to the world, who hated it because it tormented their consciences. Before the coming of Christ there was but one candlestick, with two olive trees to pour oil into it; but when Christ came he broke down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, and built his church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Eph. ii. 14—22. And when antichrist arose, God said, I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And it is to be observed, that the church is in the wilderness, and the beast continues all the time that these witnesses prophecy in sackcloth. Rev. xi. 3, 4; xii. 6; xiii. 5. The two Testaments, believed and obeyed by the children of God, appear to be the two witnesses.

And a being anointed by the Spirit of Christ, is essential to the name Christian. For the disciples were not called by this name, until after the

Gentiles were received into the church without circumcision. Acts xi. 26. And it is said, If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the *Spirit* of glory, and of God resteth upon you ; on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busy body in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a *Christian*, let him not be ashamed ; but let him glorify God on this behalf. I Peter iv. 14—16. Ye are not in the flesh, but in the *Spirit*, if so be that the *Spirit* of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the *Spirit* of Christ, he is none of his. Rom. viii. 9. Again, it is said, Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the *Spirit* which he hath given us. I John iii. 24. And Jesus said, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. John xiv. 23. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God ; he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed ; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds. II John 9—11. And how clearly do these things shew, that no person can be a Christian without a change of heart by the Spirit of Christ ! Yea, and that receiving and supporting true ministers, and refusing to receive false teachers, is ever a matter between God and individuals, as much as faith in Christ is for eternal salvation ! And no men can have any more right to support religious teachers by the sword, than they have power to pull down the Son of God from his throne in heaven. For he says, All they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword. Matt. xxvi. 52. My kingdom is not of this world ; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews ; but now is my kingdom not from hence. John xviii. 36. How then will any men dare to support religious ministers by the sword of the magistrate ? For his power is to punish none but those who work ill to their neighbors ; and it is a matter of conscience with Christians to be subject to such rulers, who are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Rom. xiii. 1—10. But the royal prophet says of wicked rulers, They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage. They slay the widow and stranger, and murder the fatherless. Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. Psalm xciv. 5—7, 20. Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law ? .... The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies, he shall wound the heads over many countries. Psalm cx. 5, 6. And how awfully is he now doing it ! Rev. xix. 11—21.

And is it not evident that the late increase of Baptist churches has been



caused by the influence of the Spirit of God? For before he poured out his Spirit in the county of Hampshire, in and after 1734, there were but six Baptist churches in all New England, except in Rhode Island government, wherein are now two hundred and eighty-five churches. And in these four States, where ministers have been supported by law, all the power of such ministers and rulers has been against the Baptist churches; and they have found so much difficulty in supporting their own ministers, and in guarding against oppression from others, that some societies have obtained incorporations by the laws of men. But our Associations have published testimonies against all such incorporations, as they implicitly deny that the laws and Spirit of Christ are sufficient to govern his church, and to support his ministers. And while they act all the affairs of their Associations openly, before all men who have a mind to hear them, and then publish their conclusions to the world, how can they hope for any earthly advantage thereby? If heavenly influence has not increased their churches, what cause can be assigned therefor? All true believers in Christ are born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John i. 12, 13. Natural descent, the power of our own wills, and of the wills of other men, are all excluded from this affair. And where the opposite principles have crept into Baptist churches, their welfare has been obstructed thereby, and many such churches have been dissolved. Yet the word and Spirit of God have reformed old churches, and raised many new ones in all parts of America. There was one Baptist church in Virginia, and a few in the Carolinas seventy years ago; but they were dark and feeble societies until some spiritual preachers were sent among them, in and after 1753. The elders, Benjamin Miller, Isaac Stelle, Peter Peterson Vanhorne, and John Gano, went from New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and labored in those parts to good purpose. And Elder Shubael Stearns, Daniel Marshall, and others, went from Connecticut, and spent their lives in those parts, as was before observed; and how great has been the increase of the Baptist churches in those southern States! And though vast pains have been taken, by men who have supported their worship by force, to make the people believe that the Baptists were enemies to good government, yet how are they now confounded in those attempts! For it now appears that government and liberty are united in their plan of conduct, which tends to bring all wars to an end. And in a prophecy concerning that glorious event, it is said, All people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever. Micah iv. 5. All men who love any creature above the Creator are idolaters.

But our Lord says, If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. .... If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but

because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John xv. 10, 19. How then will any men dare to confound the church and world together in religious affairs? For as long as natural birth could bring the children of Israel into the church, and into the priesthood, God said to them, The man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. Levit. xx. 10. And he now says to all the world, Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. .... There is one lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another? James iv. 4, 12. Yet men in general have assumed the power of lawgivers and judges for the church of Christ, and of bringing children into it before they could choose for themselves; and they have invented a multitude of other names and denominations of men, besides the righteous and the wicked, the church and the world. Though the word of revelation says, Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother: and wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. I John. iii. 9—12. Woe unto them; for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. Jude 11. Because the worship of Abel, by faith in the blood of Christ, was accepted of God, and the worship of Cain without such faith was not accepted, he was filled with envy against his brother. But the Lord said unto Cain, If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. Gen. iv. 4—7. True believers have ever been the best subjects of civil government; but men have discovered enmity against them in every age, because of the light of holiness which God hath caused to shine in their lives, to expose the hypocrisy and wickedness of others. But every man is guilty of adultery, who hath not been made dead to the works of the law, in order to be married to Jesus Christ. Rom. vii. 1—6. For every true Christian hath been presented as a chaste virgin to him. II Cor. xi. 2. But after God had consecrated Moses as the lawgiver to his church, and Aaron and his lawful posterity to be the only priests therein, to offer sacrifices for iniquity, until Jesus came and offered himself without spot to God for sinners, Korah gathered a large company against them, saying, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the

congregation are holy every one of them, and the Lord is among them ; wherefore then lift you up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord ? But for this they perished most terribly. Numb. xvi. 1—3, 32, 33. This gives a plain view of the way of Cain, the error of Balaam, and the gain-saying of Core, which evils many have charged upon believers, because they have held to salvation by faith in the perfect righteousness of Christ, and to have his church governed by his laws, which admit none into it without a credible profession of the new birth. Thus men have called evil good, and good evil ; have put darkness for light, and light for darkness, bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. Is. v. 20.

But an inspired apostle says, We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth ; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. I Cor. ii. 12, 13. And let us now attend to this rule. For God says, Thy Maker is thine husband (the Lord of hosts is his name ; ) and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. . . . And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Is. liv. 5, 13. And Jesus says, No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him ; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. John vi. 44, 45. The *children* of the church of Christ, are *men*, who have been taught of God, and have learned of the Father, so as to come to the Son. So Paul says, Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all. Gal. iv. 26. And John says, I saw the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Rev. xxi. 2. And Jesus says, Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. . . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls ; who when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it. Matt. vii. 6 ; xiii. 45, 46. So likewise, whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Luke xiv. 33. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John iii. 3. Every several gate was of one pearl. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and adulterers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come ; and let him that heareth,



say Come; and let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Rev. xxi. 21; xxii. 14—17. And how clearly do these things shew, that the government of the church of Christ is as distinct from all worldly governments, as heaven is from earth! Yea, and that no one has any true right in his church, until he comes to Christ by faith which worketh by love that is as free as water! For God says, In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall *flow* unto it. And many nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Micah iv. 1—3. Now all men may know, that this prophecy has never yet been fulfilled; but it will as surely be accomplished, as any prophecy ever was in this world. How earnest then should all be to hear and obey the revealed will of God!

And no man can obey him without denying himself, and taking up his cross, and following the example of Christ. And the apostle Paul says to the ministers of Christ, I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of yourselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, you yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts xx. 27—35. And how has this prophecy been fulfilled in every age since it was published! And how few believe that God, and the word of his grace, is able to build up his church, and to guard against grievous wolves, and against perverse schismatics, without the laws of men enforced by the sword! Yea, how much has the sword promoted both of these evils! And how little do we believe, that it is more blessed to give than to receive! It is blessed to re-

ceive, when we receive in a right manner ; but all things below perish in the using, while all that is given for the benefit of the bodies or souls of others, is laying up treasure in heaven, which will turn to praise, honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. And though Paul had written to the church of Corinth, upon their duty to support the preachers of the gospel, yet as deceitful teachers had tried to destroy his character, pretending that he acted from selfish motives, he refused to receive any support from them, until he could come and have those accusations tried before that church, in the mouth of two or three witnesses, according to the law of Christ. But as his refusal to receive any thing of them, as he did of other churches, might seem to be a dishonor to the church of Corinth, he said, Forgive me this wrong. II Cor. xi. 12 ; xii. 13 ; xiii. 1—4. And this shews that a particular church of Christ is the highest judicature that he has established upon earth, to carry his laws into execution in his name. And the people also are to act towards their ministers as they can answer it to God in the last day. For he says, The laborer is worthy of his reward. I Tim. v. 18. Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived : God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing ; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Gal. vi. 6—9. Thus ministers and people are required to act towards each other, as they can answer the same to God, who only can bless or curse them in time and eternity. And Christ says to his ministers, He that heareth you, heareth me ; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me ; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. Luke x. 16. And how solemn are these considerations ! Yea, and how safe are all true believers in Christ !

For he says, Upon this Rock I will build my church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matt. xvi. 18. And though many have made strange work of this saying, and others have paid no regard to it, yet many ancient passages may serve to explain its vast importance. For it is said of God's people of old, When he slew them, then they sought him ; and they returned and inquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they *lied* unto him with their tongues ; for their *heart* was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant. Psalm lxxviii. 34—37. Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement ; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us ; for we have made *lies* our refuge, and

under falsehood have we hid ourselves ; therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation ; he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of *lies*, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place ; and your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand. Isaiah xxviii. 14—18. And this prophecy is applied to them who followed after the law of righteousness, but sought it not by faith in Christ, but as it were by the works of the law. They had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. And whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed. Rom. ix. 31—33 ; x. 1—4. He that believeth on him shall not be confounded. I Peter ii. 6. From whence we may learn, that all men who trust in their own doings, instead of the perfect righteousness of Christ, are in covenant with death, and at agreement with hell. And earthly monarchy has generally been the darling of such men. Therefore God says to them, Thou wentest to the king with *ointment*, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers afar off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell. Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way, yet saidst thou not, There is no hope ; thou hast found the life of thine hand, therefore thou wast not grieved. Isaiah lvii. 9, 10. David, and his race of kings, were *anointed* of the Lord to their office, as eminent types of Christ. And the rage of hypocrites and infidels, against the Lord, and against his *anointed*, was against his *Christ*. Psalm ii. 2 ; Acts iv. 26. And every child of God has the *anointing* of his Spirit abiding in him, which effectually teacheth the soul to abide in Christ. I John ii. 27. But the calling any ruler, since the death of Christ, The Lord's *anointed*, and the setting up any earthly heads to the church, is a practice which came from hell, from the bottomless pit ; and this is the beast who causeth God's witness to prophesy in mourning, and at length kills them. Rev. xi. 7 ; xiii. 1, 2, 12 ; xvii. 8.

And the saints have a gradual victory over him. For John says, I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire ; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for thou only art holy ; for all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are made



manifest. Rev. xv. 2—4. The sea of glass, mingled with fire, is the word of God, enforced upon the souls of men by his Holy Spirit. For one apostle says, Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all with open face, beholding as in a *glass* the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. II Cor. iii. 17, 18. And another says, Lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a *glass*; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, this man shall be blessed in his deed. James i. 21—25. And when a prophet met with most cruel treatment, he said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning *fire* shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. And God says, The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully; what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a *fire*? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Jer. xx. 9; xxiii. 28, 29. Therefore they who stand upon the sea of glass mingled with fire, are they who hear and obey the revealed will of God. Moses was the lawgiver to the church of Israel, and the Lamb is so to the church of God among all nations. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. . . . Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. iii. 5, 6; xi. 1. And how clearly do these passages prove, that true believers in Christ are the only persons of whom his house or church is composed! For no others can hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope of salvation in Jesus Christ. The beast appears to be the church of Rome, over many nations; his image, all national churches; his mark, all supporting of worship by tax and compulsion, and the number of his name, includes all the schemes of men to hold the church in bondage, so that she might not be governed wholly by the laws of Christ.

And this may lead us to consider, what is intended by the killing and resurrection of the two witnesses. If they be the two parts of the Holy Scriptures, believed and obeyed by the children of God, then their death is the triumphing of the world over them. And the prophecy says, When they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the

bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. Rev. xi. 7—10. Our Lord was crucified by hypocrites, and infidels; and he declared those hypocrites to be worse than the old Sodomites. Matt. xi. 23, 24; Luke x. 12. And God said in prophecy, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away as I saw good. Neither hath Samaria committed half thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they. . . . Nevertheless, I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger; and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. Ezek. xvi. 48—51, 60, 61. According to which prophecy, the church of Christ was erected in Jerusalem, and she received the Samaritans, and then the Gentiles into the church as daughters, but not by the covenant of circumcision, which the Jews were in after the Samaritans were separated from them. But this *proverb*, this high *figure* which God delivered to Jerusalem, is now held up as a *literal prophecy*, that all the old Sodomites will finally be saved from hell.<sup>1</sup> Though God said to Jerusalem, Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite. Ezek. xvi. 3. Which could not be literally true, because Abraham and Sarah sprang from Shem, and the Amorites and Hittites from Ham. But it is said of false teachers under the gospel, As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. II Tim. iii. 8. Jannes and Jambres were magicians of Egypt, who hardened the heart of Pharaoh against the call of God, to let Israel go and serve him according to his own institutions. And Sodom was never more set against purity, nor Egypt against liberty, than the world now is against the purity and liberty of the gospel. For truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Isaiah lix. 14. The nations of the world will not suffer a *form* of godliness to be buried from among them; but how are they set against the power thereof! For as the body without the

<sup>1</sup>Winchester's Dialogues, pp. 197—200.

spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. James ii. 26. Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Rev. iii. 1. Whereas an inspired apostle said, The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Rom. viii. 2. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak. .... For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. II Cor. iv. 13—18. But how is this life of faith now killed by a deceitful world!

Though the prophecy says, After three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them; and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past, and behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. Rev. xi. 11—15. And we are to observe, that when the seventh angel shall begin to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared by all his prophets. Rev. x. 7. So that the resurrection of the two witnesses, in the eleventh chapter, and the resurrection of the souls of the faithful, in the twentieth chapter, appear to be the same glorious event, given under different views. For our Lord said to John, Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter. Rev. i. 19. When Christ was born of a virgin, in the true church of God, the nation of Israel was part of the Roman empire, which had seven heads, and ten horns; and Herod sought to slay the child Jesus, as soon as he was born, and Pilate crucified him, after which he was caught up unto God, and to his throne, where he will rule all nations with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Rev. xii. 1—5; Luke i. 32, 33; Matt. ii. 3—16; xxvii. 24; Acts ii. 23, 24; iv. 25—28; Psalm ii. 1—9. And these things John *had seen*. He had seen the crucifying of Christ by the rulers of the Roman empire, urged on to do it by false teachers among the Jews; for God had before said, The ancient and honorable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. Isaiah ix. 15. And deceitful teachers have ever been the meanest and worst of all men upon earth, and they were the tail of the dragon in the Roman empire. But no men who have sup-



posed that this twelfth chapter speaks of another child who should be born after the apostolic age, could ever give any rational account of him. Many have supposed it was Constantine, the first emperor who owned the Christian name; but he divided the empire, and prepared the way for the advancement of the man of sin, as we have before proved. And after the ascension of Christ to heaven, it was said, Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Rev. xii. 10, 11. In this way the power of the devil was destroyed in the old Roman empire. And when Satan shall be bound, so as not to deceive the nations any more, the prophecy says, I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Rev. xx. 4, 5. And is not this the same resurrection which is spoken of in the eleventh chapter? For the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, according to each of these prophecies. And Daniel says, The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. Dan. vii. 18. And the raising of the souls of the old martyrs, appears to mean the same as the coming of John in the spirit and power of Elijah. Mal. iv. 5, 6; Luke i. 17. Neither have we any more reason to think, that the bodies of all the saints will be raised, before their reign with Christ a thousand years, than the Jews had to expect that Elijah would personally come down from heaven, before the Messiah appeared among them. And as all men are dead in trespasses and sins, until they are made alive to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and yet they have ever assumed the place of lawgivers and judges for the church of Christ, I believe that that when God says, The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished, he means that they shall not have the power of government over the church, as they have ever had since the rise of antichrist. For as Christ is the only Husband of his church, how much like Sodom are all men who assume any power of government over her in religious affairs, so as to hinder her from obeying him as a chaste virgin! There were some ministers of the devil, who transformed themselves as the ministers of righteousness, in the apostolic age, whose end was according to their works. II Cor. xi. 2—15. And we may well conclude that there are many such in our day; and how pernicious is their influence among all

people who receive them ! And supporting such with the sword, is using of it to uphold the kingdom of the devil. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.

We readily grant, that no prophecy of Scripture was ever clearly understood by men, until the event explained it. The disciples of Christ knew not the Scriptures that he was to rise again from the dead, until he appeared to them, and explained the prophecies concerning it. Luke xxiv. 25—27 ; John xx. 9. And how long was it before they were clearly convinced that circumcision was abolished ? And it is most evident that all national churches have sprung from an abuse of the covenant of circumcision. That covenant gave Israel a right to seize upon the lands of the heathen in Canaan, and to buy others for servants ; and all the plantations that have been made in America, under the name of Christianity, have been made by those who imagined that Christians had a right to deal thus with all heathens. But as our Lord hath expressly excluded slavery, and the use of the sword of the magistrate from the government of his church, we may know that all these things belong to Mystery Babylon. Literal Babylop had her name from Babel, where they said, Let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth. Gen. xi. 4. And is not the pursuit of all men naturally, to get to heaven by their own doings, and to make themselves a name upon the earth ? Babel signifies *confusion* ; and an inspired apostle says, Where envying and strife is, there is *confusion*, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. James iii. 16, 17. And no men have this wisdom, but they who are born again by the Spirit of God. And to such another apostle says, We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts ; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man ; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruc-

tion. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness, shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you ; whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. II Peter i. 16—21 ; ii. 1—3. And how clearly are our times here described ! For the fleets and armies which have filled the world with confusion and slavery, have been raised and upheld by national churches ; and their vast funds of money, which are daily bought and sold by deceitful men to enrich themselves, have been kept in credit by the labors of the faithful. Thus, God says, shall they make merchandise of you. And if it had not been for this wicked conduct our national debt might all have been paid off before now. But instead of it the debt is daily increasing, and many have tried all their arts to draw America into another war with foreign nations. Though when the church of Christ shall be wholly governed by his laws, above all the powers of the world, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Isaiah ii. 1—4.

But, instead of such a blessing, more blood has been shed in latter ages, by the nations who have borne the name of Christianity, than by all other nations in the world ; and this is now loudly proclaimed in Europe and America, as a strong argument against divine revelation. Whereas, we have just seen that damnable heresies will cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of. The light of revelation has ever enlarged the capacities of men, beyond any other means in the world ; but they who have not received the word into an honest and good heart, have been hardened afterwards like a rock, or have been as sharp as thorns, to tear away the property, or to destroy the lives of others. Luke viii. 4—15. But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. Heb. vi. 8. Yet many teachers now bring this last passage, to prove that the true children of God may fall away and perish forever ; while others are holding up hell as a purging fire, which will finally purge away all sin from every child of Adam : as if the sufferings of a creature could purge away sin, instead of the blood of Christ applied by the Spirit of God. Thus they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. His person was crucified between two thieves, and his cause is crucified between opposite teachers and professors. But our Lord says, Enter ye in at the strait gate ; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat ; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Matt. vii. 13, 14. Though the world is full of men who deny this, and who bring in damnable *heresies*. And they have perverted this word so much, as often to turn it against all those who have withdrawn from worldly churches, while others have applied the word to doctrines rather than practice. But if we take our ideas



from the word of God, and not from the traditions of men, we may find that heresy means *rebellion* against God in his church. For when the Jews accused Paul of sedition, and being a leader of a new sect, he denied the charge, and said, After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets. Acts xxiv. 5, 14. They accused him of rebellion against government, and of being the leader of a new sect, who preferred Jesus of Nazareth above Moses, the great lawgiver to Israel. This last charge he owns, and so was a firm believer in revelation, while they rejected the counsel of God against themselves. And each heretic is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. Titus iii. 10, 11. For our Lord says, All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets. And each professor who breaks this law of equity, and will not repent, is to be rejected by the church. And when such men form other communities, with other laws than the laws of Christ, it is a way which tries the hearts of all. Therefore the voice of inspiration says, If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God. Now in this that I declare unto you, I praise you not, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it. For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. I Cor. xi. 16—19. Hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions and heresies, are all works of the flesh. Gal. v. 20. Now in all these passages, heresy appears to mean rebellion against God in his church. And another apostle says of them who loved the world above God, They went out from us; but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us. And this is the spirit of antichrist. I John ii. 15—19. All religious communities wherein the love of the world prevails above the love of God, are chargeable with damnable heresies.

In monarchical governments the power is in a few hands, but in America all power of government is derived from the people, who have a fair opportunity to know teachers by their fruits. And where is the man who cannot distinguish thorns and brambles from trees which bear good fruit? Luke vi. 44, 45. Our Lord here plainly refers us to a parable concerning the first man who set himself up as king of the church of Israel, when God was their only king. All the good trees refused any such power over other trees, but the bramble said, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon. Judges ix. 8—15. The tongue setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.

James iii. 6. And such men would destroy the best characters in the land, if they would not yield to their darling schemes. But no man should ever be elected into office, who has not been found to be a good tree by his fruits in private stations; and all teachers should be avoided, as wolves in sheep's clothing, who tear away the property of any unjustly. And it is impossible for any community to be clear of this evil, where religious teachers are supported by force. For as the church of Israel were never allowed to do it, when they came into that practice, God said, Her princes within her are roaring lions, her judges are evening wolves, they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her prophets are light and treacherous persons, her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law. Zeph. iii. 3, 4. And all the natural lions and wolves in the world, never destroyed so many men, as national churches have done in our day. Again it was said of Israel, The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. But for these iniquities their nation was ruined, and the mountain of the house of God will be exalted above all earthly powers, when wars shall come to an end. Micah iii. 11, 12; iv. 1—5. Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us, was the language which brought ruin upon Jerusalem, and such confidence in negatives will ruin all people who build thereon. For reason as well as Scripture discovers, that the more light men have, the greater is their guilt and misery if they sin against it. But when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all his holy mountain. Isaiah xi. 6—9. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. John xvii. 3. This is the only way of peace and eternal happiness.

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END OF VOLUME II.





# INDEX.

- ADAMS, John, opposes Baptists in Continental Congress; II, 201.
- ADAMS, Samuel, opposes Baptists in Continental Congress; II, 201.
- ALDEN, Noah, preaches in Woodstock; II, 135. Pastor in Bellingham; II, 425. In Tolland; II, 531.
- ALLEN, Col. Ethan, services of; II, 209.
- ANABAPTISTS, law against; I, 126. Law reenacted; I, 145.
- ANDROS, Sir Edmund, tyranny of; 416, 418, 423.
- APPLETON, John, imprisoned and fined under Andros; I, 417.
- ARIAN controversy in England; I, 491.
- ARMINIAN controversy; I, 22.
- ARNOLD, Benedict, interpreter with the Indians; I, 100, 162.
- ARNOLD, Gov., letter to Commissioners of United Colonies; I, 250.
- ARNOLD, Wm. and others of Pawtuxet, protected by Mass.; I, 99, 112, 172, 240.
- ASHBURNHAM, Baptist church in; II, 464.
- ASHFIELD planted; II, 149. Baptists oppressed in; II, 150. Dispute concerning; II, 156, 158, 180, 201. Law in regard to, repealed by the king; II, 159. How secured; II, 160, 162. Revival in; II, 279, 468.
- ASHFORD, Ct., Baptist church in; II, 520.
- ASPINWALL, Wm., banished; I, 68.
- ASSOCIATIONS, Baptist; II, 410.
- ATHERTON, Capt., collects tribute of the Indians; I, 274.
- ATLEBORO', Baptist churches in; II, 276, 447.
- BABCOCK, Stephen, pastor in Westerly; II, 510.
- BACKUS, Eliz., account of; I, 496. Imprisoned for rates; II, 98.
- BACKUS, Isaac, taxed, with his church, to Congregational worship; I, 201. Visits Esther White in prison; II, 96. Sketch of; II, 106. On "Internal call"; II, 108. Visits Titicut; II, 108. Arrested for rates; II, 109. Is baptized; II, 111. Adopts restricted communion; II, 116. Sermon on "Bond woman and free"; II, 117. Letter to Dr. Lord; II, 139. Chosen agent of Baptist churches; II, 177. Newspaper articles of; II, 178, 180, 221, 222, 224, 226, 231. Appeal to Continental Congress; II, 200. False reports concerning; II, 202, 226, 546. Appeals for religious liberty; II, 219. "Government and liberty described"; II, 223. Gradual growth of his views; II, 261. Delegate to the Constitutional Convention; II, 335. Address to the Convention; II, 336. Labors on Martha's Vineyard; II, 452. Address to the Provincial Congress; II, 549.
- BACKUS, Joseph, opposes Saybrook Platform; I, 474, 536. His punishment of Rogerenes; II, 12.
- BALDWIN, Thomas, pastor 2d Baptist church, Boston; II, 422.
- BANCROFT, George, History of United States quoted; I, 28, 40, 60, 76, 279.
- BARSTOW, Jer., pastor in Sutton, account of; II, 460.
- BAPTISTS, laws in relation to; I, 518, 521, 534; II, 140, 156, 316, 345, 346. In war of Revolution; II, 162, 198. Appeal to Continental Congress; II, 200. To Provincial Congress; II, 202. To Massachusetts Assembly; II, 203, 219. To the people; II, 227. Doctrinal views of; II, 232,

- 303, 487, 104, 105. Oppressed in Virginia; II, 333, 495.
- BAPTIST CHURCHES, lists of; II, 306, 391.
- BARNSTABLE, Baptist church in; II, 270, 351, 451. Baptists oppressed in; II, 351, 451. Letter to the Congregational Committee; II, 352.
- BAXTER, George, brings the charter of R. I.; I, 279.
- BAXTER, Josiah, forgery concerning; I, 323.
- BEALS, Isaac, pastor in Leicester; II, 458.
- BELCHERTOWN, Baptist church in; II, 470.
- BELLINGHAM, Baptist church in; II, 277, 424.
- BERNARD, Richard, author of "The Separatists' Schism"; I, 1. Extracts from his work; I, 2.
- BERWICK, Baptists oppressed in; II, 165. Baptist church formed; II, 480.
- BIGELOW, Samuel, pastor in New Salem; II, 469. Letters of; II, 470.
- BISHOP, George, Account of his "New England Judged"; I, 374.
- BLOOD, Caleb, pastor in Newton; II, 457. In Shaftsbury, Vt.; II, 546. Election Sermon of; II, 546.
- BLUNT, John, Baptist minister in Sturbridge, returns to Pædobaptism; II, 459.
- BOUND, James, a Baptist in Danvers; II, 30.
- BOSTON, settlement of; I, 33. 1st church in; I, 33. Brattle St. church; I, 461.
- BOSTON, 1st Baptist church in; I, 288. Its discipline; I, 387. Letter of; I, 389. Meeting-house nailed up; 390. Writes to London for minister; I, 407. Reply to; I, 407, 466. John Emblen, pastor; I, 419. Letter to London for aid; I, 489.
- BOSTON, 2d Baptist church formed; II, 53, 421.
- BOUND, Ephraim, pastor 2d Baptist church, Boston; II, 422.
- BOWDOIN, Me., Baptist churches in; II, 485, 486.
- BRADFORD, William, Governor, opposes religious oppression; I, 432, 434.
- BRAINARD, David, expelled from Yale College; II, 44.
- BRAINTREE, Mr. Wheelwright in; I, 64.
- BREWSTER, William, letter to the Council for Virginia; I, 24. Comes to America; I, 24. Ruling elder at Plymouth; I, 30.
- BRIDGES, Robert, arrests Clarke, Holmes, and Crandal; I, 178.
- BRIDGEWATER, Baptists oppressed in; II, 229. Baptist church in; II, 270, 430.
- BRIGGS, Joel; II, 425.
- BRIMFIELD, Baptist church in; II, 31, 278, 467. Baptists in, misrepresented; II, 143. Revival in; II, 278.
- BRISCOE, Nathaniel, writes against supporting ministers by compulsion; I, 80.
- BROWN, John and Samuel, banished from Massachusetts colony; I, 32.
- BROWN UNIVERSITY. See R. I. College.
- BUET, Hugh, the first man banished from Massachusetts on pain of death, for heresy; I, 95.
- BULKLEY, Mr., disputes with Wightman; I, 519; II, 516.
- BULLOCKSGRANT, Baptist church in; II, 477.
- BUNKER HILL, battle of; II, 193, 205.
- BURDICK, Robert, of R. I. imprisoned by Mass.; I, 269.
- BURDICK, Ruth, letter of to Samuel Hubbard; I, 330.
- BURGOYNE, Gen., surrender of; II, 212.
- BUTLER, Bishop, on religious declension; II, 37.
- BUTTERFIELD, Joseph, pastor in Marshfield; II, 431.
- BYLES, Mather, becomes an Episcopalian; II, 13.
- CALLENDER, Elisha, education of; I, 420, 483. Ordained by aid of Congregationalists; I, 421, II, 419. Secures Hollis's gifts to Cambridge College; I, 485, II, 419. Refusal to appoint him overseer of Cambridge College; I, 495. Baptizes in Springfield; I, 513. Death of; II, 32, 419.
- CALLENDER, Ellis, pastor 1st Bap. church, Boston; I, 420, II, 419.
- CALLENDER, John, extracts from his Century Sermon; I, 357, 370, II, 285. Account of Century Sermon; II, 31, 498. Settled in Newport; II, 29, 498. Death of; II, 287.
- CAMBRIDGE, Bap. church; II, 277, 328. 2d church; II, 457.
- CAMBRIDGE College; I, 81, 446, II, 330, 346.
- CANTERBURY Archbishop of, commission to; I, 49.
- CARPENTER, Wm., minister in Norton; II, 134.
- CARVER, Bap. church in; II, 431.
- CATHOLICISM, work entitled; I, 535, II, 171.
- CASE, Isaac, preacher in Maine; II, 484, 486. Letters from; II, 485.
- CHAMBERLAIN, Peter, letter from; I, 379. Reply to; I, 379. 2d letter of; I, 388.
- CHANDLER, Thos. B. "Appeal to the Public"; II, 188.

- CHARLTON, Bap. church in; II, 459.
- CHASE, Richard, pastor in Harwich; II, 450.
- CHAUNCEY, Charles, renounces infant sprinkling; I, 95. Mishap in dipping an infant; I, 120. Sketch of his life; I, 229. President of Harvard College; I, 229. Sermon on "Liberty of Conscience"; II, 36. "Thoughts"; II, 56. Preaches against Whitefield; II, 75. Against religious establishments; II, 147. Sermons on Breaking bread; II, 171. Inconsistency of; II, 223. Universalist views of; II, 248, 326.
- CHELMSFORD, Baptists oppressed in; II, 177, 181. Bap. church in; II, 456.
- CHESHIRE, Bap. church in; II, 471. Revival in; II, 471.
- CHURCH, Capt. Benj., services in Philip's war, I, 342.
- CHURCHWOOD, Humphrey, letters of; I, 401, 402. Examined by magistrate; I, 402.
- CHUBB, Thos., extracts from; II, 208.
- CLAP, Capt. Roger, on the character of the first settlers; I, 437.
- CLARKE, John, date of his coming to America; I, 70. Settles Rhode Island; I, 71. Minister at Newport; I, 125, II, 16, 497. Narrative quoted; I, 71, 72, 178—198. Arrested for preaching in Lynn; I, 179. Sentenced to pay fine or be whipped; I, 180. Challenges a dispute; I, 181. His doctrinal views; I, 182, 206. Discharged from prison; I, 184. Renews his offer to dispute; I, 185. Letter to Gov. Endicott; I, 186. Visits England in behalf of Newport; I, 221. Letter to, from Assembly; I, 251. Appointed to solicit a new charter; I, 276, 497. Appointed to codify the laws of R. I; I, 281. Purity of his character; I, 348. Services of; I, 348, 349. Family of; I, 348, 352. Not paid for services; I, 350. Will of; I, 351. Letter to Samuel Hubbard; II, 497.
- CLARKE, Sam'l, an Arian; I, 491.
- CLEVELAND, John, expelled from Yale College; II, 71, 129, 509. Dispute with Mayhew; II, 130, 237.
- CLEVELAND, Eben'r, expelled from Yale College; II, 71, 129.
- COBBETT, Thomas, "Vindication of the Covenant, &c."; I, 149. Quotation from; I, 153. Account of; I, 247.
- CODDINGTON, Wm., judge in Rhode Island; I, 72, 78. Treatment of by Mass.; I, 94. President of Gen'l Assembly; I, 168. Letter to Gov. Winthrop; I, 169. Attempts to divide the colony; I, 169. Commissioned Governor of the Islands; I, 213, II, 497. His com-mission vacated; I, 223, II, 497. Submits to the colony; I, 242. Letter to Geo. Fox against Roger Williams; I, 353, 370. Gov. of the colony; I, 369. Issues military orders; I, 370.
- COGGSHALL, John, banished; I, 68.
- COLCHESTER, Ct., Bap. church in; II, 520.
- COLLINS, Wm., banished from Mass.; I, 97.
- COMER, John, Account of; I, 496. Visits Springfield; I, 515. Preaches to Baptists in prison; I, 519. His becoming a Baptist; II, 17. Settled at Newport; II, 17, 97. Doctrinal views of; II, 18, 500. His Diary; II, 19. Dismissed from his church; II, 20, 498. Joins the Six Principle Bap. church; II, 21, 500. Becomes pastor in Rehoboth; II, 28, 436, 498. Labors in Sutton and Middleboro'; II, 29. Death of; II, 31, 436.
- COMMUNION, without baptism; II, 106. Open, II, 115.
- CONCORD; battle of; II, 192.
- CONDY, Jeremiah, pastor 1st Bap. church, Boston; II, 32. Congregationalists invited to his ordination; II, 32. Complaint against his doctrines; II, 53, 276, 419.
- CONGRESS, Continental; II, 191, 195. Plea of Baptists before; II, 200.
- CONGRESS, Provincial; II, 190, 193. Baptists plea before; II, 202.
- CONNECTICUT, list of rulers; I, 431. 1st Bap. church in; I, 466. Sketch of Bap. churches in; II, 515—531.
- CONSTITUTION of Mass., and religious freedom; II, 225, 550.
- CONSTITUTION of the U. S. ratified; II, 335.
- COOKE, John, Bap. minister in Dartmouth; I, 452, 454.
- COOMBS, Simeon, pastor in Montague; II, 469.
- COOPER, Samuel, Election Sermon; II, 230, 253.
- CORLISS, Mary, imprisoned for rates; II, 145.
- COTTON, John, his influence; I, 33. Persecuted in England; I, 42. "Bloody Tenet washed" quoted; I, 44, 45, 47, 52, II, 360. On Williams's banishment; I, 46, 51. Letter to Lord Say and Seal; I, 61. On ministers' maintenance; I, 80. Favors Mrs. Hutchinson; I, 84. Difficulty with the General Court; I, 84. Reconciliation; I, 85. His opinion of Wheelwright; I, 117. Account of his "Bloody Tenet washed"; I, 133. Extracts from it; I, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 143, 158, II, 382. His "Grounds and Ends, &c."; I, 148. Quotations from; I, 151,



152. Letter to Sir Rich'd Saltonstall on Clarké and Holmes; I, 199.
- COTTON, John, "Narration" of; II, 62.
- CRANDAL, John, arrested for holding meeting in Lynn; I, 179. Discharged; I, 187.
- CROMWELL, Oliver, letter to Roger Williams; I, 242.
- CROSBY, Thomas, History of the Baptists, quoted; I, 43, 82, 83, 84, 87, 91, 147, 339, II, 27.
- CUDWORTH Capt., on persecution of Quakers; I, 254, 524.
- CUMMINGS, Abraham; II, 481.
- CUSHMAN, Robert, agent of Plymouth colony; I, 31.
- DANFORTH, Mr., notice of Election Sermon; I, 320.
- DARTMOUTH AND TIVERTON, oppression of Baptists and Quakers in; I, 500. Appeal to the king; I, 501. Relief granted; I, 503.
- DARTMOUTH, Bap. church in; I, 454, 505, II, 288, 449.
- DAVENPORT, James; II, 49.
- DAVIS, John, vilified; II, 157. Sketch of; II, 176. Pastor 2d Bap. church, Boston; II, 422.
- DEERFIELD, N. H., Bap. church formed; II, 168, 535.
- DEVENPORT, Mr., writes against Half-way Covenant; I, 267, 268. Pastor of 2d Cong'l church, Boston; I, 309. Death of; 317.
- DEXTER, Gregory, Town Clerk of Providence; I, 236. Letters of; I, 235, 237.
- DICKINSON, Jona.; Dialogue on infant baptism; II, 54. Reprinted; II, 138. Reviewed by Dr. Gill; II, 139.
- DIGHTON, Bap. church in; II, 448.
- DINGLEY, Rich'd, pastor at Newport; I, 420, II, 16, 498.
- DOUGLAS, Baptist church in; II, 465.
- DRINKER, Edw., letter of, on persecutions in Boston; I, 316.
- DUDLEY, Baptist church in; II, 465.
- DUNSTAR, Henry, President of Harvard College; I, 96. Renounces infant baptism; I, 94, 453, II, 418, 508. Removed from office; I, 227, II, 418. Testimony to his character; I, 227. At the trial of Thos. Gould; I, 290.
- DYER, William, disfranchised; I, 68. Schemes and measures of, in R. I.; I, 223.
- DYRE, Mary, sentenced to be hung; I, 262. Executed; I, 263.
- EASTON, Nicholas, views of; I, 97. Removes to N. Y.; I, 120.
- EATON, Isaac, preacher and teacher, in N. J.; II, 346.
- EDWARDS, Jonathan, on ministerial education; II, 36. Settled in Northampton; II, 37. Revival in his church; II, 37. Writings of; II, 41, 48, 54, 56, 91. Dismissed from Northampton; II, 92, 238. Death of; II, 92. Treatise on the Will; II, 251.
- ELDRIDGE, Enoch, pastor in Barnstable; II, 448.
- ELECTION, Baptists on; II, 104, 105.
- ELLIS, John, Cong'l minister in Rehoboth; difficulty with; II, 353, 442, 550.
- EMBLEM, John, pastor 1st. Bap. church, Boston; I, 419, II, 419. Death of; I, 420.
- EMMONS, Nath'l, "Against Hemmenway"; II, 371.
- ENDICOTT, John, Gov. of Mass. colony; I, 32. Chosen Gov. for life; I, 61.
- EPISCOPACY in America; I, 463, 516, II, 321.
- EPISCOPIUS; See Polyander.
- EWER, John, Bishop, reproaches America; II, 187.
- EYRES, Nicholas, pastor in Newport; II, 29. Letter on rebaptizing; II, 105. Death of; II, 287.
- FARRIS, Eben'r, becomes a Baptist; II, 170.
- FINLEY, Dr. Sam'l, expelled from Conn.; II, 59.
- FISK, Henry, account of Baptists in Sturbridge; II, 94.
- FISH, Elisha, writings of; II, 343, 344.
- FISH, Joseph, writes against Baptists; II, 146.
- FLETCHER, Sam'l, pastor in Salem, N. H.; II, 535. Abused in Pepperell; II, 220, 536.
- FOULGER, Peter; I, 346, II, 452.
- FOSTER, Benj. pastor in Leicester; II, 278, 458. In Newport, II, 458, 499.
- FOX, George, Founder of the Quakers; I, 245. Notice of his writings; I, 257. Extracts from; I, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 355, 356, 361, 365, 367, 368, 369.
- FOXCRAFT, Century Sermon quoted; I, 33.
- FRAMINGHAM, Baptists in; II, 98, 458.
- FRANKLIN, Benj., letter to Lord Howe, II, 207.
- FREETOWN, religious oppression in; I, 500, II, 448. Bap. church in; II, 448.
- GAIR, Thos., pastor 2d Baptist church, Boston; II, 422.
- GANO, Stephen, pastor in Providence; II, 494.

- GIDDINGS, Geo. taxed for ministers' rates; I, 248.
- GODDARD, Edw., efforts for religious liberty; I, 533, 537.
- GOFF, Enoch, pastor in Dighton; II, 448.
- GOODWIN, Thos., writes prefaces to works of Cotton and Cobbet; I, 150.
- GOODWIN, Dr., and others, letter of against persecution; I, 314.
- GORDON, Wm., writings of; II, 227, 228.
- GORGES, Sir Ferdinando, attempts settlements in America; I, 23.
- GORHAM, Me., Baptists oppressed in; II, 179. Bap. church formed; II, 481.
- GORTON, Samuel, "Glass for N. E." quoted; I, 65, 116, 117. Difficulties of in Mass.; I, 98. Settles in Pawtuxet; I, 98. Imprisoned in Mass.; I, 105. Banished on pain of death; I, 107, II, 504. Views of; I, 108, 109, II, 3. Claims protection of the king; I, 160, 163. Publishes his defence; I, 163. Sustained by power in England; I, 164. Correspondence with the Quakers; I, 245. "Simplicity's Defence" quoted; I, 103, 104, 105, 111.
- GORTON, Stephen, minister in New London; I, 520, II, 517.
- GOULD, Thomas, and others, form 1st Bap. church, Boston; I, 238. Tried before the Cong'l church; I, 290, 298, 299, 300, 302. Imprisoned; 303, 304, II, 418. Petition for his release; I, 304. Released; I, 315. Death of; I, 327.
- GOULD, wife of Thos., her testimony; I, 305.
- GRAFTON, Bap. church in; II, 465.
- GRAFTON, Joseph, pastor in Newton; II, 457.
- GREAT AWAKENING; II, 35.
- GREEN, Nath'l, pastor in Charlton; II, 459.
- GREEN, Thos., pastor in Leicester; II, 31. Death of; II, 278.
- GREENE, John, fined for contempt of magistrates; I, 70. Escapes imprisonment; I, 106. Writes to Mass. for Warwick, I, 219.
- GREENSMITH, Stephen, banished; I, 65.
- GROTON CONFERENCE, held mixed communion; II, 414, 510.
- GROTON, Ct., 1st Bap. church in; I, 466, II, 516.
- HALF-WAY COVENANT; I, 267. Controversy on; I, 267, II, 239.
- HALL, Silas, Collection of papers quoted; I, 401, 402, 404, 420, 484, 489, 501, II, 94, 106, 460, 461, 465.
- HAMLIT, Wm., letters of; I, 320, 326.
- HANCOCK, Bap. church in; II, 474. Revival in; II, 475, 477.
- HARPSWELL, Me., Bap. church in; II, 481.
- HARRIS, Wm., writes against government; I, 241. Impeached; I, 241, 241. Favors government; I, 243. Difficulties with; I, 363, 364. Warwick complains against; I, 371. Enslaved in Turkey; I, 372. Was he a Quaker? I, 128, 527.
- HARTFORD, Vt., oppression of Baptists in; II, 548.
- HARVARD, Bap. church in; II, 199, 463.
- HARWICH, 1st Bap. church in; II, 269, 450. 2d Bap. church in; II, 269, 450. Baptists oppressed in; II, 550.
- HAVERHILL, Bap. church in; II, 138, 456. Oppression in; II, 141, 144.
- HAZEL, John, fined for shaking hands with Obadiah Holmes; I, 194. Testimony of; I, 196.
- HEBERD, Jedediah, pastor in Lebanon, N. H.; II, 540.
- HERRINGTON, Benj., pastor in Swanze; II, 434.
- HICKS, John, pastor in Rehoboth; II, 437.
- HIGGINSON, Francis, minister at Salem; I, 32.
- HILL, Chas., imprisoned for rates; II, 98.
- HINDS, Eben'r, pastor in Middleboro'; II, 270, 427.
- HINGHAM, riotous proceedings in; II, 273.
- HOLLIS, Thos., gifts to Cambridge College; I, 486, 495, 512, II, 25, 419. Account of by Edw. Wallin; I, 488. His influence; I, 495. Letter to Wheaton; I, 510, 534. Death of; II, 25. His family; II, 25.
- HOLLIMAN, Ezekiel, baptizes Roger Williams; I, 86. II, 285. History and character of; I, 86, 87.
- HOLMES, Obadiah, his account of his life; I, 173. Withdraws from the Orthodox church and is baptized; I, 176. In court for holding illegal meeting; I, 177. Letter to John Spilsbury; I, 187. Sentence of; I, 187. Whipped; I, 190. His confession of faith; I, 206. Pastor at Newport; I, 406, II, 16, 493. Death of; I, 406.
- HOOKE, Thomas, resolution of in favor of infant baptism; I, 96. On the grounds of infant baptism; I, 160. On the power of councils; I, 413, II, 174.
- HOPKINS, Sam'l, "System of Doctrines"; II, 363.

- HOPKINS, Stephen, on the 1st church in Providence; I, 88.
- HOPKINTON, R. I., Bap. church in; II, 507.
- HOWE, Richard, Chief Admiral; II, 206. Letter to Franklin; II, 206.
- HOWE, Wm., Gov. of Mass., and Gen. in Chief; II, 206. Recalled; II, 214.
- HOWELL, David, copies documents for Backus; I, 414.
- HUBBARD, Wm., on the religious principles of N. E. planters; I, 33. Election Sermon of, quoted; I, 384, II, 318. As a historian; I, 398.
- HUBBARD, Samuel, extracts from his Ms.; I, 178, 311, 325, 329, 344, 372, 376. Letter of to Bap. church, Boston; I, 317. Sketch of; II, 498.
- HUNT, Asa, pastor in Middleboro'; II, 271, 429. Labors in Marshfield; II, 272. Death of; II, 429.
- HUTCHINSON, Anne, opinions of; I, 66, 374. Banished; I, 68. Murder of; I, 375.
- HUTCHINSON, Francis, banished from Massachusetts; I, 97.
- HUTCHINSON, Thomas, Governor, influence against the colonies; II, 186, 189, 190.
- INDEPENDENCE, declaration of; II, 206.
- INFANT BAPTISM, on faith of parents; I, 265; II, 416.
- INGALLS, Elkanah, pastor in Grafton, sketch of; II, 465.
- IRELAND, Shadrach, leader of the Shakers; II, 462.
- JACOBS, Whitman, pastor in Royalstone; II, 462, 520.
- JENCKES Daniel, agency in securing the charter of R. I. College; II, 347.
- JENCKES, Joseph, Governor, on the punishment of Clarke and Holmes; I, 193, 200. On laying on hands; II, 22. Notices of; 511, 513.
- JENNINGS, Samuel; I, 484.
- JESSEY, Henry, notice of; I, 83, note.
- JOHNSON, Edward, History quoted; I, 35, 63, 101, 107, 436, 438; II, 504. On the ecclesiastical government of New England; I, 202, 214, 227.
- JONES, Ebenezzer, pastor in Middleboro'; II, 271, 428.
- JUSTIFICATION OF SEPARATION; see Robinson, John.
- KELLY, Erasmus, sketch of; II, 498.
- KIFFIN, William and others, letter from; I, 381.
- KILLINGLY, Ct., Baptist church in; II, 525.
- KIMBALL, Martha, imprisoned for rates; II, 144.
- KITTERY, baptisms in; I, 400. Baptist church formed; I, 404; II, 479. Church dissolved; I, 405, 467.
- KNOLLYS, Hansard, sketch of; I, 82.
- LANCASTER, Baptists oppressed in; II, 229.
- LANESBORO', Baptist church in; II, 473.
- LAYING ON OF HANDS at baptism; II, 5, 491, 493, 499.
- LEBANON, N.H., Baptist church in; II, 540.
- LEDDRA, William, a Quaker, hanged; I, 265.
- LEDOYT, Biel, conversion and labors of; II, 135, 521, 540, 547. Letters to Backus; II, 522, 540.
- LEETE, William, letter to Peter Chamberlain; I, 379.
- LEICESTER, Baptist church in; II, 31, 278, 458.
- LELAND, Aaron; II, 425.
- LELAND, John, sketch of; II, 473.
- LENTHAL, Robert, disciplined on religious accounts; I, 93. Farther accounts of; I, 94.
- LEVERETT, John, Governor, letter on the boundary line of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island; I, 281.
- LEWIS, Abner; II, 447, 448.
- LEXINGTON, battle of; II, 192.
- LUCAR, Mark, elder in 1st Baptist church, Newport; I, 353.
- LUTHER, Samuel, pastor in Swanzy; I, 420; II, 433.
- LYME, Ct., Baptist church in; II, 519.
- LYNDON, Josias, sketch of; II, 498.
- MACOMBER, Job, preacher in Maine; II, 484.
- MAINE, Baptist churches in; II, 479—488.
- MAKEPEACE, Thomas, censured for his "novel disposition"; I, 93.
- MALDEN, church in, fined for calling an unsatisfactory minister; I, 214.
- MANNING, James, President of R. I. College and preacher in Warren; II, 137, 347, 348, 492, 503. Plea before Continental Congress; II, 201. Influence of; II, 346. Delegate to Congress; II, 349. Pastor in Providence; II, 492. Sketch of; II, 493.
- MARSH, Benjamin; II, 460.
- MARSH, Thomas, imprisoned for preaching; II, 77.
- MARSHALL, Stephen, sermon on infant baptism; I, 146.
- MARSHFIELD, Baptist interest in; II, 272.



- MARTHA'S VINEYARD, Baptists on; I, 346; II, 267, 452, 507. Baptist church on; II, 269, 452.
- MASCALL, Robert, letter of against persecution; I, 311.
- MASON, Peletiah, tradition of in respect to baptism; I, 92.
- MASSACHUSETTS Colony settled; I, 32. Letter of to England; I, 42. Patent of; I, 46. List of rulers; I, 425.
- MASSACHUSETTS, sketch of the Baptist churches in; II, 266—283, 417—478.
- MATHER, Eleazar, writes against Half-way Covenant; I, 267.
- MATHER, Increase, mover of the Reforming Synod; I, 385. His "Divine Right of Infant Baptism"; I, 391, 394. Writes Preface to "*Ne Sutor*"; I, 392, 417. Sent to England against Andros; I, 419, 530. On Callender's ordination; I, 421. On religious declension in New England; I, 458, 459, 464. Dismissed from presidency at Cambridge; I, 460. On the power of councils and synods; I, 482. Death of; I, 507. "Vindication of gospel order"; II, 383.
- MATHER, Cotton, on the 1st Baptist church in Boston; I, 288. On the 2d Congregational church, Boston; I, 309. Letter to Callender; I, 420. Preaches at Elisha Callender's ordination; I, 421. Extracts from his sermon; I, 421, 484. On the constitution of a church; I, 441. Letter to Ellis Callender; I, 477. On synods; I, 508.
- MATTHEWS, Marmaduke, called by the church in Malden; I, 214. Treatment by General Court; I, 214.
- MAYHEW, Experience, ministry on Martha's Vineyard; I, 345.
- MAYHEW, Jonathan, on original sin; II, 129. Dispute with Cleaveland; II, 130, 237. On future punishment, &c.; II, 235.
- MAYHEW, Zechariah, letter from; I, 347.
- MAXCY, Jonathan, pastor in Providence; II, 493. President of R. I. College; II, 494.
- MAXWELL, Samuel, pastor in Swanzev; II, 275, 434. In Rehoboth; II, 436.
- MCSPARRAN, James, writings of; II, 184.
- MEDFIELD, Baptist church in; II, 379, 425. Baptists oppressed in; II, 379.
- MELLEN, James, pastor at S. Brimfield; II, 143, 278, 467.
- MENDON, Baptists oppressed in; II, 177.
- MESSER, Asa; II, 455.
- METHODISM in America; II, 323, 505.
- MIANTINOMU, murder of; I, 103, 433. Character of; I, 161.
- MIDDLEBORO', revival in; II, 48. 1st Baptist church; II, 116, 270, 426. 2d Baptist church; II, 134, 270, 427. 3d Baptist church; II, 134, 270, 428. Revival in; II, 271. Oppression in; II, 141.
- MILES John, founds a church in Wales; I, 282. In Rehoboth; I, 284, 433. Fined therefor; I, 285. Death of; I, 406. Sketch of; II, 433.
- MITCHELL, Jonathan, resolution of in favor of infant baptism; I, 96, 228, 301, 508. Drafts the Half-way Covenant; I, 267. Defends it; I, 268. Against unconverted church membership; I, 459; II, 361.
- MONTAGUE, Baptists oppressed in; II, 163. Baptist church in; II, 469.
- MOODY, Joseph, sued for rates; II, 179.
- MOODY, Lady, suffers as a Baptist; I, 96.
- MORTEN, Ambrose, fined; I, 93.
- MORTON, Nathaniel, "Memorial" quoted; I, 25, 32, 43, 358.
- MOULTON, Ebenezer, pastor in Brimfield; II, 31, 467. Labors in Sturbridge; II, 94. Baptizes in Titicut; II, 110.
- MUMFORD, Stephen, Seventh Day Baptist, from London; I, 324.
- NELSON, William, pastor in Norton; II, 446.
- NELSON, Samuel, pastor in Middleboro'; II, 429.
- NELSON, Thomas; II, 270, 427.
- NEW BEDFORD, Baptist church in; II, 449.
- NEWBURY, Baptist church formed; I, 405.
- NEW GLOUCESTER, Me., Baptist church in; II, 481.
- NEW HAMPSHIRE, sketch of the Baptist churches in; II, 533—544.
- NEW LONDON, Ct., Baptist church in; I, 520; II, 517.
- NEW LONDON, N. H., Baptist church in; II, 537.
- NEWMAN, Samuel, difficulty with Obadiah Holmes and others; I, 176, 204, 453.
- NEWPORT settled; I, 94. 1st Baptist church in; I, 97, 125; II, 15, 287. Six Principle church; II, 16, 287, 288. Seventh Day church; I, 325; II, 287, 500. Congregational church; II, 96. 4th Baptist church in; II, 502.
- NEW SALEM, Baptist church in; II, 469.
- NEWTON, Baptist church in; II, 456.
- NEWTON, N. H., Baptist church in; II, 167, 534.
- NORTHBRIDGE, Baptist church in; II, 461.
- NORTON, Baptist church in; II, 134. Unites with church in Taunton; II, 276, 446.
- NORTON, Humphrey, tried as a Quaker; I, 256, 525. Letter to Gov. Prince; I, 256.

- NORTON, John, sermon of in Boston; I, 159. Account of; I, 247.
- NORWICH, Ct., 1st church and the Saybrook Platform; I, 476.
- NOWEL, Increase, at Holmes's whipping; I, 191. Arrests Hazel and Spur; I, 184. Account of Hazel and Spur; I, 195.
- OATES, Samuel, tried for baptizing; I, 323.
- OLNEY, Thomas, pastor in Providence; I, 92, 405; II, 285, 490.
- OSBURN, Thomas, member of 1st Baptist church, Boston; I, 288, 289. Tried by Congregational church; I, 289, 297, 298, 299.
- OWEN, on toleration; I, 142.
- OXONBRIDGE, John, pastor of 2d Congregational church, Boston; I, 316, 317.
- PALMER, John, vindicates Andros; I, 417.
- PAINE, Elisha, account of; II, 64, 450. Imprisoned for preaching; II, 65, 68, 100. Letters of; II, 67, 69, 100. Warning against; II, 72. Preaches at Windham; II, 77. On Baptists and Separates; II, 114, 518.
- PAINE, John, account of; II, 64. Imprisoned; II, 80.
- PAINE, Solomon, account of; II, 64. "View of the churches"; II, 64, 101. Imprisoned; II, 80. Death of; II, 114. Plea for religious liberty; II, 80.
- PAINTER, Mr., whipped for not suffering his child to be baptized; I, 127. Sent to Mr. Cobbett to answer; I, 150.
- PARKER, Isaiah, converted; II, 199. Pastor in Harvard; II, 463. Abused in Pepperell; II, 220, 536.
- PARRIS, Samuel, and Salem witchcraft; I, 443, 445.
- PAYSON, Phillips, Election Sermon; II, 220, 253. Address to the constitutional convention; II, 336.
- PEAK, John; II, 535.
- PEPPERELL, riotous opposition to Baptists; II, 220.
- PERSECUTION, religious, root of in Mass.; I, 35.
- PETERS, Hugh, minister in Mass. colony; I, 61, 89.
- PETERSHAM, Bap. church in; II, 278, 461.
- PHILIP, an Indian, account of; I, 331. Death of; I, 343.
- PHILIP'S WAR, rise of; I, 331. History of; I, 331—345.
- PIERCE, James, adopts Arian views; I, 491, 493.
- PIKE, Mr., of Dover, immerses; I, 476.
- PILGRIMS at Plymouth, trials of; I, 28.
- PITTSFIELD, Bap. church in; II, 474.
- PLYMOUTH, settlement of; I, 27.
- PLYMOUTH COLONY, list of rulers; I, 423.
- POLYANDER and Episcopius; I, 22.
- POMEROY, Benj.; II, 41.
- POMFRET, Ct., Bap. church in; II, 524.
- PORTSMOUTH settled; I, 94.
- POTTER, James, preacher in Maine; II, 483, 486.
- POWELL, Mr., Gen'l Court forbids Boston church to call; I, 214, 215.
- POWER, Nicholas, imprisoned with Gorton; discharged; I, 107.
- POWERS, Walter, pastor in Newton, N. H.; II, 534.
- PRINCE, Thos., on religious declension in N. E.; I, 457. "Christian History"; II, 51.
- PROCTOR, John; II, 140.
- PROVIDENCE, settled; I, 58. Deed of; I, 72. Roger Williams conveys it to the settlers, Their Covenant; I, 74. Names of settlers; I, 74. Name given to it; I, 75. Baptist church; I, 87, II, 285, 490. Meeting-house of; II, 495. Covenant of the inhabitants; I, 167. 1st Cong'l church in; II, 6. Letter from Mass.; II, 7. Cong'l Society chartered; II, 172.
- PURITANS in Holland; I, 1, 22.
- QUAKERS, persecution of in Mass.; I, 54, 212, 251, 524. Origin of the name; I, 245, 523. Mass. warns against; I, 246. R. I. refuses to persecute; I, 251. Act against by United colonies; I, 253. Persecution of in Plymouth colony; I, 254. Laws against; I, 263. Proceedings against, restrained; I, 265. Mass. petitions against the restriction; I, 265. Warlike measures of; I, 370. Their principles considered; I, 373. Oppressed in Little Compton; I, 479. Mistakes of the book in respect to, corrected; I, 523.
- RANDOLPH, Edward, attempts against Mass.; I, 416.
- RANSOM, Elisha, labors in Vt.; II, 547.
- RATHBUN, Valentine, pastor in Pittsfield; II, 474.
- RAYNHAM, Bap. church in; II, 450.
- REHOBOTH, 1st Bap. church in Mass. formed here; I, 282, 284. Baptists and Quakers oppressed in; I, 519, II, 353. Bap. church formed in; I, 29, 436. Sketch of; II, 276. Difficulty in Cong'l church; II, 353. Other Bap. churches in; II, 437—446.
- REMELE on the Atonement and extract from; II, 543.

- REVIVAL of 1780; II, 278—283.
- REVOLUTION, causes of; II, 188. History of, II, 188—217, 259, 265.
- REYNER, Mr., Congregational minister in Plymouth; I, 452, 453.
- RHODE ISLAND settled; I, 71. Deed of; I, 73, 226. Roger Williams on the purchase of; I, 73. Compact of the settlers; I, 77. Names of the settlers; I, 77. 1st Baptist church on; I, 97, 125. 2d charter of; I, 279. Seal of; I, 281. List of rulers; I, 427. Boundaries fixed; II, 5. Sketch of Baptist churches in; II, 285—289, 487—513.
- RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE founded; II, 137. Provisions of charter; II, 173, 494. Dishonesty in procuring charter; II, 347. First graduates of; II, 348. Building used for barrack; II, 349. Funds of; II, 494.
- RICH, Elisha, pastor in Chelmsford; II, 277.
- RICHMOND, N. H., Baptist church in; II, 539.
- ROBBINS, Philemon, censured for preaching to a Baptist church; II, 43. Trial of; II, 82, 125, 525.
- ROBINSON, Geo., pastor in Bridgewater; II, 430.
- ROBINSON, John, pastor in England and Holland; I, 2. His Justification of Separation; I, 2. Extracts from that work; I, 2, &c., 30, 37; II, 234, 290. On baptism; I, 11. On the Lord's Supper; I, 11. On the keys; I, 11. On ordination; I, 13. On reformation in England; I, 17. On the parable of the tares; I, 18. On civil and ecclesiastical government; I, 19. On ministers' maintenance; I, 21. Discussion on Arminianism; I, 22. Letter to the Council for Virginia; I, 23. Letter to the Pilgrims; I, 25. Death of; I, 29. On ministerial education; I, 450. Charge to his people; II, 233.
- ROBINSON, Wm., a Quaker, testimony of; I, 258. Execution of; I, 262.
- ROCHESTER, Congregational church, difficulty in; II, 374.
- ROGERENES, rise of; I, 381; II, 11.
- ROGERS, John, and family, account of; I, 377; II, 404, 517. Persecutions of; I, 378. Strange views of; I, 381; II, 11. Writings of; I, 382, 466; II, 11.
- ROGERS, Wm.; II, 500.
- ROOTS, Peter P.; II, 420.
- ROUND, Nathaniel, pastor in Rehoboth; II, 437.
- ROUND, Richard, pastor in Rehoboth; II, 437.
- ROYALSTONE, Baptist church in; II, 461.
- ROWLANDSON, Mary, captivity of; I, 334.
- RUSSELL, John, elder in 1st Baptist church, Boston; I, 317; II, 419. False report of his death; I, 320. Pastor at Boston; I, 383. His "Narrative"; I, 391. Death of; I, 392. Hubbard's abuse of; I, 397.
- RUSSELL, Richard, at the trial of Thos. Gould; I, 292. Issues warrant against Baptists; I, 297.
- SAGADAHOC, settlement at; I, 23, 28; II, 482.
- SALEM, settled; I, 32.
- SALEM, N. H., Baptist church in; II, 535.
- SALISBURY, N. H., Baptist church in; II, 538.
- SALTONSTALL, Gurdon, Governor of Connecticut; I, 469, 536; II, 318.
- SALTONSTALL, Sir Richard, letter on the treatment of Clarke and Holmes; I, 198.
- SANDEMAN, Robert, "Theron and Aspasio"; II, 127. Comes to America; II, 130, 528. Views of; II, 131, 296.
- SANDERS, Tobias, of R. I., imprisoned by Mass.; I, 269.
- SANDISFIELD, 1st Baptist church in; II, 475. 2d church; II, 476.
- SAYBROOK, Ct., oppression of Baptists in; II, 529.
- SAYBROOK PLATFORM; I, 470; II, 123, 127. An innovation; I, 475. Law sustaining it; II, 44.
- SCAMMON, Mrs., leads to forming Baptist church in Stratham, N. H.; II, 167.
- SCOTT, Richard, on Roger Williams; I, 89, 354; II, 285.
- SCREVEN, Wm., licensed by 1st Baptist church, Boston; I, 401. Imprisoned; I, 403; II, 480. Fined; I, 404. Letter of; I, 404; II, 480. Invited to be pastor of 1st Baptist church, Boston; I, 467; II, 419.
- SEABURY, Bishop; II, 321, 513.
- SEAMANS, Job, pastor in Attleboro'; II, 447. In New London, N. H.; II, 537. Letters of; II, 537, 538.
- SELLON, John, pastor in Templeton; II, 465.
- SEPARATISTS from English church; I, 1.
- SEPARATISTS in New England commence at Canterbury, Ct.; II, 68. Ministers of; II, 78. Errors and difficulties among; II, 87.
- SEVENTH DAY BAPTISTS, commencement of in Newport; I, 324. Covenant of their 1st church; I, 325. Letter to from Gould and others in Boston; I, 325. Views considered; II, 501.



- SHAFTSBURY, Vt., Baptist church in; II, 546.
- SHAKERS; II, 297, 404, 462.
- SHAWOMET, see Warwick.
- SHAY'S REBELLION; II, 330.
- SHEPARD, Nathaniel, pastor in Attleboro'; II, 447.
- SHEPARD, Thomas, minister in Mass. colony; I, 61. His "First Principles"; I, 160.
- SHEPARD, Samuel, becomes a Baptist; II, 168. Ordained; II, 169, 535.
- SILVESTER, Richard, fined; I, 93.
- SIMS, Zach. at the trial of Thos. Gould; I, 291.
- SIX PRINCIPLE BAPTISTS, II, 16, 27.
- SKELTON, SAMUEL, minister at Salem; I, 32.
- SKILLMAN, Isaac, pastor of the 2d Baptist church. Boston; II, 422.
- SMITH, Chileab; II, 149. Imprisoned on false charge; II, 159.
- SMITH, Eliphalet, becomes a Baptist; II, 168. Pastor in Deerfield, N. H.; II, 168, 535. Pastor in Maine; II, 486, 535.
- SMITH, Hezekiah; II, 455. Settles in Haverhill; II, 137. Baptizes in N. H.; II, 169.
- SMITH, John, a Baptist at Amsterdam; I, 43.
- SMITH, John, banished from Massachusetts; I, 55;
- SMITH, John, fined; I, 93, 94.
- SNOW, Joseph, of Providence, difficulty with his church; II, 373.
- SOUTH KINGSTOWN, Baptist church in; II, 28, 288.
- SPILSBURY, John, opinion on baptism; I, 91.
- SPRAGUE, David, settled in North Kingstown; II, 104. In Exeter; II, 105, 507. Death of; II, 289.
- SPRAGUE, Jonathan, letter to Massachusetts ministers; II, 8. Reply to; II, 9. 2d letter; I, 400; II, 10.
- SPRINGFIELD, rise of Baptists in; I, 512. Request to Boston for aid; I, 513. Request to Newport; I, 515. Controversy with Congregational ministers; I, 514. Baptist church formed; II, 33, 468.
- SPUR, John, fined; I, 94. Fined for shaking hands with Obadiah Holmes; I, 194. Testimony of; I, 194.
- STAMFORD, Ct., Baptist church formed; II, 170, 528.
- STEARNS, Shubael, labors of at the south; II, 530.
- STENNET, Edw., letter of; II, 501.
- STEVENSON, Marmaduke, a Quaker, testimony of; I, 258. Execution of; I, 262.
- STILES, Ezra, predicts the future of denominations in America; II, 312, 403. Connection with the charter of R. I. College; II, 347.
- STILLMAN, Samuel, Election Sermon; II, 225, 424. Pastor 1st Baptist church, Boston; II, 419, 422.
- STOCKBRIDGE, case of discipline in; II, 239. Baptist church in; II, 477.
- STODDARD, Solomon, his "Appeal to the Learned"; I, 386. On the Lord's Supper; I, 462, 468, 536; II, 37, 239.
- STONINGTON, Ct., Baptist church in; II, 519.
- STOUGHTON, Wm., on religious declension in New England; I, 457.
- STOWERS, John, fined for reading Briscoe on ministers' support; I, 80.
- STRATFIELD, Ct., Baptist church in; II, 527.
- STRATHAM, N. H., Bap. church formed in; II, 167.
- STREETER, Adam, pastor in Douglas; II, 465.
- STURBRIDGE, Bap. church in; II, 94, 459. Oppression in; II, 94.
- SUFFIELD, Ct., Bap. church in; II, 526.
- SUTTON, Baptisms in; II, 29. Bap. church in; II, 31, 460. Dissolved; II, 277; 2d church; II, 277. Other churches in; II, 460.
- SWANZEY, settlement of; I, 285. Church in; I, 285. Required to settle a legal minister; I, 449. Records destroyed; II, 24. Protests against union with Pædobaptists; II, 33. Sketch of its History; II, 275, 433. 2d Bap. church in; I, 450. Required to settle a legal minister; I, 499. Sketch of; II, 275, 434.
- SWEETSER, Benj., letter of, giving account of 1st Bap. church, Boston; I, 320.
- SYNOD of 1646; I, 155. Of 1679; I, 385. Called in 1725; I, 506. Prohibited; I, 507.
- SYMONDS, Samuel, judgment of in case of taxing for minister's rates; I, 248.
- TABOR, Philip, sued for minister's tax; I, 500.
- TAUNTON, difficulty in Cong'l church; II, 355. Bap. church in; II, 276, 446.
- TEMPLETON, Bap. church in; II, 465.
- TENNENT, Gilbert, visits N. E.; II, 39. Character of his preaching; II, 40. On "Danger of unconverted ministry"; II, 47. Preaches in Middleboro; II, 48.
- THATCHER, Peter, preacher in Middleboro'; II, 61.
- THOMPSON, Chas.; II, 173. Pastor in Warren; II, 434, 503.
- THOMPSON, Ct., Bap. church in; II, 520.

- TILLINGHAST, Pardon, pastor in Providence; II, 16, 22, 286, 491.
- TITICUT PARISH; II, 108. Separate church in; II, 108. Disputes on baptism; II, 110. Bap. church in; see Middleboro'.
- TIVERTON, Bap. church in; II, 288.
- TOLLAND, Ct., Bap. church in; II, 530.
- TOMBES, John, his examination of Marshall's Sermon; I, 146. Sketch of his life; I, 146. Letter to elders in N. E.; I, 147.
- TRACY, Isaac, imprisoned for rates; II, 99.
- TRACY, John, captured by Indians; I, 320. Notice of; I, 320.
- TURNER, Wm., services of in Philip's war; I, 335, 337, 339, 418.
- TYSO, John, his letter to Gov. Bellingham; I, 117, 522.
- UNDERHILL, Capt., deposed from office; I, 68.
- UPHAM, Edw., pastor in W. Springfield; II, 33, 468. Removes to Newport; II, 287, 498.
- UPTON, Bap. church in; II, 465. Oppression in; II, 465.
- USTICK, Thos.; II, 494, 521.
- VANE, Sir Henry, arrival of; I, 61. Is chosen Governor; I, 61. Roger Williams testimony to; I, 73. Letter to Gov. Winthrop; I, 147. Letter of, commending Roger Williams; I, 232. Reply to; I, 235. Beheaded; I, 283.
- VERIN, Joshua, disfranchised; I, 77, II, 490.
- VERMONT, sketch of Bap. churches in; II, 545—551.
- WALLIN, Benj., on the Sonship of Christ; I, 494.
- WALLIN, Edw., letters to Callender; I, 488, 510, II, 26. Sketch of; II, 27.
- WALLINGFORD, division in; II, 127, 525. Bap. church in; II, 525.
- WALTON, John, preaches in Providence; II, 22.
- WANTON, Joseph, petitions for relief of Quakers; I, 479.
- WARBURTON, Wm., Bishop; reproaches America; II, 187.
- WARD, Nath'l, "Simple Cobbler" quoted; I, 154. Noticed; I, 397.
- WARDWELL, Lydia, goes naked into meeting; I, 261.
- WARREN, meeting-house burned; II, 214. Church unites with that in Swansey; II, 275, 434.
- WARREN ASSOCIATION, organized; II, 154, 408. Measures of; II, 178, 229, 265, 338, 352, 410.
- WARWICK, (Shawomet), settlement of; I, 100. Massachusetts attempts the control of; I, 216. Appeals to the king; I, 371. Bap. church in; II, 228.
- WASHINGTON, Geo., services of; II, 196, 210, 211, 215. Baptists' address to; II, 340. His reply; II, 340.
- WATERMAN, Richard, imprisoned with Gorton; discharged; I, 107.
- WEARE, N. H., Bap. church in; II, 537.
- WESTFIELD, Bap. church in; II, 471.
- WESTON, Bap. church in; II, 458.
- WEYMOUTH, settlement at; I, 30. "Disorderly" church restrained; I, 93, II, 360.
- WHEATON, Ephraim, minister in Swansey; I, 499, II, 434.
- WHEELLOCK, President Eleazar, views and writings of; II, 41, 541.
- WHEELWRIGHT, John, controversy with; I, 64. Banishment of; I, 65, 68. Settles at Exeter; I, 85, note. His confession; I, 128. Restoration; I, 129.
- WHITE, Daniel, preaches at Newport; I, 488. Difficulty with; II, 16.
- WHITE, Esther, imprisoned for rates; II, 96.
- WHITE, John, of Haverhill, sued for rates; II, 142.
- WHITEFIELD, George, sketch of; II, 38. Visits America; II, 38. Character of his preaching; II, 39. 2d visit to America; II, 74. Writings against; II, 75, 257.
- WIGHT, Elnathan, pastor in Bellingham; II, 277, 424.
- WIGHTMAN, Edw., of England, sentence of; I, 323. Burnt for heresy; I, 323.
- WIGHTMAN, Valentine, settled in Groton, Ct.; I, 466; II, 516. Disputes with Bulkley; I, 519; II, 516.
- WILBRAHAM, Baptist church; II, 279, 469. 2d church in; II, 469.
- WILDER, Mr., defends Thomas Gould; I, 291.
- WILKINSON, Jemima; II, 298, 404.
- WILLARD, Samuel, writes against 1st Baptist church, Boston; I, 289, 340. His "*Ne Sutor*," &c.; I, 392. On religious declension in New England; I, 458, 461.
- WILLIAMS, President Elisha, "Plea for rights of conscience"; I, 536; II, 60.
- WILLIAMS ROGER, arrives in this country; I, 39. Sketch of his previous life; I, 39; II, 489. Called by the church at Salem; I, 41. Differences with the rulers at Boston; I, 41; II, 489.

- At Plymouth; I, 43. Removes to Salem; I, 43. Banished; I, 44; II, 489. Causes of banishment; I, 44. Opposes the freeman's oath; I, 51. Esteemed at Salem; I, 52. Examined in General Court; I, 53. Disputes with Mr. Hooker; I, 54. Date of banishment; I, 54. Obtains grant of Rehoboth; I, 56. Removal to Providence; I, 57. Date of removal; I, 58. Letter to Major Mason; I, 58. Protects Massachusetts against the Indians; I, 59, 70, 113, 272; II, 490. Receives deed of Providence; I, 72. Conveys it to his friends; I, 73; II, cf. Bancroft's tribute to; I, 76. Baptism of; I, 86; II, 490. Leaves the church; I, 89; II, 2, 490. Makes peace at Pawtuxet; I, 99. Forbidden to enter Mass.; I, 121. Makes peace between Dutch and Indians; I, 121. Obtains charter of Providence; I, 122. Book against the Quakers, (George Fox, &c.) quoted; I, 118, 119, 260, 261, 355, 359, 361, 365, 367, 368, 369, 375, 376. Comes from England commended to Mass.; I, 129. His sentence of banishment; I, 131. Account of the Reply to Cotton, ("Bloody Tenet yet more bloody,"); I, 132. Extracts from the Reply; I, 44, 45, 46, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 142, 143, 144, 158, 400, 410; II, 381. Gives notice of Indian war; I, 161. Promotes peace; I, 162. 100 pounds voted to, for obtaining charter; I, 166. Letter to Providence; I, 170. Letter to Gov. Endicott on the treatment of Clarke and Holmes; I, 207. Sent again to England; I, 218. Letter to, from Prov. Assembly; I, 222. Letter of from England; I, 230. Complaint and advice to Providence; I, 233. Views on freedom of conscience; I, 237. Letter to Mass. Assembly; I, 240. Letter of Cromwell to; I, 242. Address to Mass. Assembly; I, 243. Appointed to codify laws of R. I.; I, 281. Hostage with the Indians for Mass.; I, 320. His account of Capt. Richard Smith; I, 333. Attempts to pacify the Indians; I, 336. Letter to Providence; I, 350. Account of his work against Fox; I, 355. Question whether he was a Baptist; I, 357; II, 285. His banishment reviewed; I, 357. On church government; I, 360. On punishing Quakers; I, 362. At a Quaker meeting; I, 365. Disputes with the Quakers; I, 367. Letter to Providence; II, 370. Conscientiousness of; I, 410. "Bloody Tenet," account of; I, 410. Letter to Samuel Hubbard; I, 411. "Considerations touching rates," &c.; I, 413. Death of; I, 414. Family of; I, 415.
- WILLIAMS, Wm., II, 425.
- WILSON, Deborah, goes naked through Salem; I, 261.
- WILSON, John, conduct toward Obadiah Holmes; I, 189. Warning of, against errors; I, 308.
- WINCHESTER, Elhanan, Account of; II, 439. Extract from; II, 565.
- WINSOR, Dea. Sam'l, causes division in Providence church; II, 23, 287, 491.
- WINSLOW, Edward, imprisoned by Laud; I, 49. Letter to United Colonies; I, 170. Opposes religious freedom; I, 432, 434.
- WINTHROP, Fitz John, Gov. of Conn.; I, 469.
- WINTHROP, John, Gov., arrives in America; I, 32. Testimony to his character; I, 92, 114, 436. As a historian; I, 398, II, 285, 360.
- WINTHROP, John, Gov. of Conn., on persecution of Quakers; I, 253.
- WISE, John, imprisoned and fined under Andros; I, 416. Writes against the power of Synods; I, 464, II, 318. His works republished; I, 480.
- WISWAL, see Wozel.
- WITCHCRAFT in N. E., rise of; I, 442. Hanging for; I, 443. Attempt to charge it to Baptists; I, 444.
- WITTER, Wm., of Lynn; I, 178.
- WOOD, Jabez, pastor in Swanzy; II, 434.
- WOODSTOCK, revival in; II, 135, 522. Bap. church in; II, 136, 522.
- WOODWARD, John, supports Saybrook Platform; I, 474, 536.
- WORDEN, Peter, minister in Warwick; II, 79, 288, 511. In Cheshire; II, 471.
- WOZEL, Dea., against banishment of Quakers; I, 248.
- YALE COLLEGE, account of; I, 522, II, 319. Religious test in; II, 121, 527.



## CORRIGENDA.

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The reader is requested to note the following errors : —

Vol. I, page 96, 3d line from bottom, read “ On page 86.”

Note 1, page 139, should have been referred to the 2d line from the bottom of the preceding page.

Page 303, 2d line from bottom, for “ 1741 ” read “ 1641.”

Page 325, 8th line from bottom, for “ Baxter ” read “ Baster.”

Page 373, 3d line from bottom, for “ peaceably ” read “ peaceable.”

On note 2, page 473,—“ Mr. Backus seems to have misapprehended the force of the above Article, &c.,”—the following criticism of one who has examined the work in sheets, is evidently just.—“ Does he not mean that the provision of the Article requiring the major part of the elders to concur, which elders were *ex-officio* members of the synod, and not such by appointment of the churches, was ‘ an innovation then made ’ ? It was not enough that the *majority* of a council should concur ; the ministers must be counted separately, and the major part of them must concur. Was not this feature an innovation ? ”

Vol. II, page 68, the note should be marked “ Ed.”

Pages 173, 175, page heading, for “ BOSTON ” read “ BOLTON.”

Other errors may be detected by the reader.—Ed.







